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FRONTISPIECE.

THEY'RE COMING! YES, THEY'RE LAUNCHING ANOTHER BOAT.

PAGE 355.

THE MILL AT SANDY CREEK

BY

REV. EDWARD A. RAND (1837-1903)

AUTHOR OF

"FIGHTING THE SEA," "A CANDLE IN THE SEA," "LOOK AHEAD SERIES," "SCHOOL AND CAMP SERIES," ETC., ETC.

New York
THOMAS WHITTAKER
2 AND 3 BIBLE HOUSE
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WQR 19 FEB '36

THE MILL AT SANDY CREEK.

CHAPTER I.

THE MEETING.

"SAY!"

Phil Tolman, digging clams on the flats, looked up from his work. It seemed to Phil as if the pleasantest eyes he ever saw were bending down toward him.

"Is that your boat?" asked the young man into whose eyes Phil was looking.

"Yes, sir."

He would have said "yes" ordinarily, but this being deserved something else.

"Could you row me down the shore? Oh—I don't know as you have dug your clams."

"Oh, yes, I have—yes, sir, I have. I'll do it for nothing fur as I go. Then mebbe, Kitty could the rest of the way. She does for folks sometimes."

"Very well! Kitty will do. Who will push

your boat down into the water? I—I am not strong."

"Shouldn't think you were," Phil wanted to tell him, but refrained. Instead, he assured the stranger he had "rollers" and he could "roll the boat down."

The boat was launched and Phil proudly pulled on his oars. Phil interested the passenger very much. That was not surprising, for this dark-haired, brown-faced boy was very likely to interest people. His dark eyes had a bright, expressive way of lighting up when he spoke, so that the expression of his face was continually and strikingly changing. The passenger had many questions to ask—first, Phil's name. Then he said:

"How old are you, may I ask?"

"Fourteen, goin' on to fifteen—most there."

"Do you go to school?"

"Sometimes, sir."

"Now is the time, you know. I sometimes look at men who spell poorly, write ungrammatically, think ignorantly, doing very common work, and I say, 'There was something in you, a power, that was not aroused when young, and brought out and educated. You would have been so much more in the world if you had tried to make more of yourselves, if you had

gone to school, if you had had an ambition, if you had faithfully gone to work and had cultivated what God gave you!' You won't make the mistake those men made, will you?"

"I—I won't if—I—don't have to dig too many clams."

The young man laughed and then sighed.

"That is the trouble," he thought, "or a trouble. Some people don't have much of an opportunity."

He thought awhile longer, bowing his head.

Phil's head was not bowed. He was watching this superior being who had crossed his path. Suddenly, the superior being looked up.

"I would give anything if I could row as you can, Phil."

"Too bad!" said Phil, looking very sorrowful, for he saw that the young man was an invalid.

There was another pause, the young man looking down, Phil watching him.

Suddenly, Phil called out:

"Here we are! Now I'll git Kitty!" The boat was quickly beached. "You stay here, and I'll git Kitty."

"Who is Kitty?"

"She's my sister, I tell ye."

"You like your sister."

"Guess I do. She—she's—smart. I'll git her."

Phil was going away, dragging his basket of clams after him.

"Here, Phil! You forget your pay."

It was a bright half dollar.

Phil was not accustomed to receive such generous pay.

"I—I said I'd do it for nothin', sir."

"I could not let you. You buy something—a book. Stop! People want something besides books in this world. Still I want you to buy a book, perhaps for school. You take this also."

It was another bright half dollar. Phil was dazed. He demurred;

"I—I—I——"

"You must take it, Phil."

"You're real good—could I shake hands?"

"Certainly! By all means! Now let us shake!"

The fine eyes were fastened on Phil and the young man said,

"Do your best, Phil!"

"I—will—sir."

Another moment and Phil's legs were working rapidly across the beach, and then wriggled their way over the hummock.

"Kitty, Kitty, Kit—ty!" he shouted as he ran on. "Got a job for ye!"

"How you holler! I'll come in a moment!" responded a rich-toned voice from the corner of a house where a girl was at work in a garden bed.

"Quick! He—he—wants you?"

"Who is *he?*"

"A job! Hurry!"

The young man saw two forms vigorously coming down the sandy slope Phil had scaled.

"Here, here is—Kitty!" called out Phil, all out of breath. "She'll—row ye! Good—bye—agin!"

"We will shake hands once more. Good-bye, Phil! How do you do, Miss Kitty?"

"I'm very well," replied Kitty, precisely, then proceeding to launch the boat. She jumped into it and began to row. Her companion shyly glanced at her.

She had a vigorous, healthy look. As the sun had browned her face, there was no opportunity for that brilliant contrast of shades that a less active and an in-door life would have given a complexion naturally as clear as hers. The sun though knows how to paint, and there was a richness to the tinting of her face. Her features were regular. Her eyes sparkled

with an almost restless vivacity. When her lips parted, as they often did in laughter, she showed rows of white, even teeth. There was a dimple in each cheek when she laughed, and in her chin there nestled a third dimple. She was dressed plainly, even roughly, her good looks receiving not the least help from the colors or the fabric that she wore. One though in meeting Kitty Tolman did not first think of her need of silk or a new calico even, but the thought at the front was about Kitty Tolman herself. Then in her open, frank countenance there was a certain sweetness of expression continually hovering about the lines of her mouth, giving the face a new charm.

The young man whom she was rowing, was saying to himself, "What an abounding vitality there is to this young woman! She does not look as if she had ever felt a pain. With what strength and ease and skill she rows! Some people who know I have money, wonder I dare say why some people are rich and why others are poor. Ah, why are some of us so well and others so weak! Now, I could not have walked down the beach with any comfort."

Kitty's vigor and vitality were in marked contrast with his weakness. He was very handsome. He had dark, shining eyes, black

hair that was wilfully wavy, and his complexion was very fair; but his face had a thin, haggard look, and one could but say, "What a pity that anybody so handsome should look so sick! He is so young, too!"

He was only a few years older than Kitty.

Besides youth and good looks, he had other possessions. His dress was the reverse of showy, but the cloth was of the nicest quality, and every ornament of his person was costly. His dress was that of a person of wealth. Then his manners were those of a gentleman. His talk was intelligent. He had a look of superiority unaccompanied by any trace of its assumption. You would have said his station in life was one where refinement went with wealth, out of which station went paths to the best schools and amid the best influences. But a fisherman who had watched him walking on the beach, expressed the feeling common to all who met him, "What a pity that that chap who looks so han'sum' and has money, and wears sich store-clothes and talks slick as a squire in town-meetin', should be so sick-lookin'! Those store-clothes hang on him like the coat of a scarecrow on its stick!"

The young man and Kitty Tolman had been talking on various topics.

"I can't but like him," Kitty had told herself, and she was one of the most decided young persons along the shore. "I can't but like him—he has real sense—and yet—too bad!—isn't he sick lookin'! I like him though, and his ideas."

Kitty had been giving him various bits of information as solicited by him. He had received them very deferentially, always accepting her opinion as a final one that must be right, which was very flattering to Kitty. Then he had a quiet way of leading her on to some new opinion in the direction of subjects not hitherto considered by her very definitely. There was little concealment to Kitty and yet she who gave so much, was surprised to recall what a quantity of information she had poured out upon this stranger. However he had such a way of imparting his ideas that the mind which felt very empty, quickly seemed to fill. They talked on many things that were suggested to them.

"Do you know who keeps that light-house?" he asked, pointing at a tall candle-like tower in the sea over at the left.

"Oh, at Seal's Head? Boardman Blake did keep it, but he left at the end of his term when the administration changed. People think he

might have easily kept it if he had really wanted it——"

"They ought not to change light-keepers because an administration changes, and there is an improvement now-a-days in office methods. Do you think they ought to change, especially when the keeper has shown himself capable and trusty? Ought they not to stay if they do well?"

"I think so," said Kitty, emphatically. "A man ought to stay as long as he is doin' well."

"I think you are right. You have stated it fairly. Ah, there is a life-saving station. Have they begun work for the season?"

"Yes, sir."

"And that looks like a patrolman?"

"Oh, no, it is only a big boy from a farm, Hawk's Bill."

"Hawk's Bill?"

"It is Bill Hawkins, but we call him the other sometimes. I—I don't like him," and Kitty shook her head very decidedly, as if she had a clear and positive opinion about one William Hawkins as very lacking.

"I don't like him either. I saw him up on the beach."

Kitty's blue eyes glowed. There was a

new bond of agreement between them. She liked this stranger better and better.

"A life-saving station!" he said. "I don't think I am strong enough for that work. I know I am not."

"No," declared Kitty, promptly. "It would be too hard for you. You would have to be out in all sorts of weather."

"I'd like to be strong enough to do such work but—there is no use denying it. I am too weak."

Kitty stopped rowing. She looked at him intently.

"I'm dreadful sorry!" she declared.

The young man, who had been looking off upon the sea, lifted his eyes and met her pitying gaze. Her rich, expressive voice dropped down to its low notes with a touching cadence of pity. The pity too was in her eyes, and in her attitude. She bent toward him as if it were her motherless brother Phil, who had been hurt and she wished to comfort him.

"What a musical voice!" thought her companion. "And how sympathetic! She is a very interesting girl really."

This young woman at her oars now came before him in a new manifestation. He had thought of her as vitality, as a quantity of

woman-force. Now she was a revelation of woman-pity. His eyes turned away and sought the sea, as he murmured, "Oh, I hope I shall get my health back. I—I—but I must go away, for I can not spend the winter here."

What did this young woman now murmur? He could not say. She was rowing again and she rowed in silence. She said very little until the close of the trip.

"Have I offended her?" he wondered. "I am very sorry if I have."

He tried to start the conversation again, but for some reason its resumption was difficult. Kitty was fully aware that she was indisposed to talk, but she did not trouble herself to change her mood.

"Did he say he was goin' away? Well, what if he did say it? What do I care whether he stays or goes? It is nothin' to me," Kitty told herself.

This meditation she continued, arguing stoutly with Kitty Tolman that it was an entirely trivial matter what became of this interesting young man. As something or somebody within presumed to suggest that she did care, the discussion became very absorbing. She was fully aware that he was saying something to her at times, and she would answer

but in a monosyllabic yes or no. Once she answered very carelessly.

"Is that Hawk's Bill very faithful in his duties?" he had asked.

"Oh, yes, sir."

In a moment, she looked up, merriment in her eyes, her dimples all smiling, and she asked:

"What—did you say?"

"If that Hawk's Bill or Bill Hawkins were very faithful?"

"What did I answer?"

"You said 'Oh, yes.'"

She laughed in the rich, full tones of her voice and said,

"Oh, I was—was—thinkin' of something else."

"But that Hawkins?"

"Oh, he is not worth talkin' about."

He took the hint and said nothing more about him. This also pleased Kitty. How different he was from the young men of the village who when they came in collision with her opinions, were persistent and disagreeable.

Bill Hawkins had dared go farther and had presumed to thrust his attentions upon her. She had disposed of him promptly, and the last

time she repulsed him, she knew he was "mad as a hornet."

Kitty and her passenger were now nearing the end of the route. He had told her he wished to reach a yacht lying off the shore, and she expected there might be a season of waiting on the beach until a boat from the yacht leisurely came for him, or would he not still need her services and request her to row him off to the vessel? She was disappointed when he said, "Ah, that boat on the beach belongs to the yacht! I can take it and it will save me trouble."

"Very well," said Kitty coldly, carelessly, in the tone of one who was entirely indifferent to the movements of her passenger.

"Ah, what is that?" he asked suddenly, glad to notice something that would help him bring her out of this mood which puzzled him.

"Where?"

"Why, what is that place I can see through that break in the hummock, those trees making such a pretty green surface beyond the yellow sand?"

"That is my grandfather's place," she gladly told him.

"He believes in making the most of his opportunities."

"He has done some hard work."

She spoke in an interested tone and he was glad to see the change.

"It makes a great difference," he remarked, "if a man will make the most of everything, the most of himself——"

"What, sir?"

"Why, if we try to do as well as we can with ourselves and what belongs to us——"

"It don't seem as if some folks had a chance. I sometimes have said I hated rich people."

The next moment, she was very sorry she had said this.

"Not more than some rich people hate themselves——"

"What?"

"Why, it seems as if any one must see that there are things about themselves they can't be satisfied with——"

"Well," said Kitty, almost fiercely, "when rich people make the most of themselves, then it is time for poor people to begin."

"We are all," he solemnly said, "as the prayer book tells us, 'miserable offenders'; we are all very poor people, all very lacking."

"And some more so than others," affirmed the persistent Kitty.

"Undoubtedly, madame," he replied, in

a half sarcastic tone, at the same time smiling at Kitty's ready words.

The boat had rubbed against the sands, and the young man was moving toward the bow of the boat.

"Oh, wait," called out Kitty. "I'll pull the boat up."

"Oh, let me get out," he urged, still coming forward.

"You'll wet your feet and that won't git you well. You wait!"

"But what about yours?" he asked.

"Yours are of more consequence," she replied.

He appreciated this return to the old mood of compassionate interest in an invalid.

"I am going to get out," he told her.

She did not argue with him but anticipated him and boldly splashed into the water. He then saw that her feet were bare. She herself was suddenly conscious of her shoeless condition.

"A poor girl!" was his thought.

Seizing the boat by the bow, she now triumphantly pulled it high enough to enable her passenger when he might leave the boat, to step out on the gray sand.

"Thank you! I did not mean to trouble

you to do all this. You take capital care of your passengers."

She motioned to him to get out on the right side of the boat. Her shoeless feet were now hidden, also a torn place in the skirt of her dress.

When he had stepped upon the beach, he held out a half-dollar.

She shook her head.

"I am very much obliged," he declared, "but here is your—" he fancied she would not for some reason like the word "pay" and he said—"fee."

He laid the coin on the boat-rail, but something in her face seemed to say that not only parleying would vex her, but she would shake the coin off upon the sand. Uncertain just what it was best to do, he transferred the coin to the seat in the stern, remarking, "I beg your pardon—I did not mean to offend you."

"You could not help it; but I do not wish for the money."

"Good-bye, and say good-bye to Phil. I took a positive interest in him!"

He had not taken the money again and she was not now thinking about it, only that somebody was saying good-bye.

She was silent.

"I shall—not—not——" he stammered. "I shall—not soon forget the pleasant boat-ride you gave me. I haven't my old strength, and——"

"Oh, you will be better, I *know*. Good-bye!"

Then she raised her pitying face.

He politely touched his hat and stepped back.

She silently, gravely nodded her head.

"A strange girl," he murmured, turning round when a hundred feet away. "A bright boy, that brother!—A girl of great force of character!" he assured himself, when another hundred feet away, turning round. "I like them both.—A wonderful girl!" he asserted, when three hundred feet away. "A manly fellow!"

But not again on the beach did she look toward him. She canted the boat and bailed out some water that had gathered in the bottom.

"He is lookin'! Don't you look!" she told herself.

Then she picked up two rollers, placed one a few feet ahead of the boat and the other roller directly under the bow. Then she pushed the boat up the beach.

"He is lookin'," she murmured, and picking up the two oars, carried them up the slope of the hummock.

"He is lookin'," she again declared, and rapidly crossed the crest of the hummock tufted with plumes of green beach-grass. She went down the other side of the hummock, and then ran across a stretch of grass to a diminutive building, against whose southern wall she leaned the two oars. She entered this little house and ran up a flight of stairs to a room in the low story and looked out of a window that faced the water. She could see a gracefully modelled yacht half a mile from shore. A boat was pushing off from the sands, heading for the yacht.

"I think I see him in the stern. Yes, I see him. Does he see me?" she murmured.

"Oh, why did I look so savage to-day? I wonder where Phil is!"

She went to the window and from it called, "Phil!"

There was no answer.

"I wonder where that boy is!"

CHAPTER II.

WHAT WAS THE MATTER?

WHEN the sails of the yacht had passed behind great doors of fog noiselessly closing upon it, Kitty turned from the window. Then she looked upon the walls of her room and exclaimed impatiently, "Oh, dear! What a place!"

She certainly was not in the habit of criticising the looks of the room, though an unplastered roof covered it. Several girls in the neighborhood did not have a chamber to themselves; Kitty was empress in this room. On stormy nights when the sea with its heavy batteries was bombarding the hummocks, and the wind would venture still farther and rush up to her window and boldly clamor for admission, she not only rejoiced in the security of the spot but it took on a positive attractiveness.

"How nice!" she would say, looking upon her low-walled room, thinking of the girls that

had no separate apartment. Then extinguishing her candle and shutting out this complacent vision, she would fall back on her pillow. The noises of the storm, as if music, would lull her to a luxurious rest, while a gentle touch seemed to press together her eyes in dreamless slumber.

Now, how very unsatisfactory this room was!

"It ought to be lathed and plastered!" said Kitty, looking at the bare, brown boards. "If I can only earn enough, I'll do it. And those nails keep sticking out and hurting me. And that chimney, the old thing!"

This unadorned pillar of brick ran up through one corner of her room. In the interstices of mortar, she had driven nails on which to hang various articles. Had not this been satisfactory? What other girl in that hamlet had a chance to hang "her things" all by themselves? "Nice to have a chimney in your room," Kitty had often thought. It was aristocratic. Then on bitterly cold nights, it had been a relief to press her chilled hands against the bricks warmed by a roaring fire of driftwood below. "Good as a stove!" she said. What other girl had this convenience?

Now, what a rough-looking object was that bare chimney of poorly burnt brick!

"It is really ugly!" declared Kitty. "And my dress! Oh, pizen! If I only had known, I might have sewed it up where torn in the skirt. I—I shall despair if I have not needle and thread."

But Kitty was not a creature of despair. She visited a humble chest of drawers, and not only needle and thread were there, but she fished up to the surface a piece of bright blue ribbon.

"I knew I'd find something else," murmured Kitty.

Ah, such as Kitty never come to the bottom of their resources, for Hope, vigorous and irresistible is always there.

Kitty went to work in her prompt, energetic fashion, and soon made all possible repairs. The blue ribbon she tossed about her neck, picturesquely bringing together the ends of this strip of sky. She brought out her Sunday shoes and put them on. She took down from its nail in the chimney her pretty Sunday hat and balanced it as well as a young woman could, on rich, luxuriant masses of hair. This week-day display, was something unusual for Kitty, but why she did it, she herself did not definitely appreciate. She was not accustomed to ask of her moods any explanation. Into a piece of looking-glass she now looked,

but any inquiry as to her possible attractiveness was checked by her criticism of the mirror.

"Oh, what a ridic'lous piece of looking-glass! Where did I git it, and I wonder how I put up with it so long!"

It was only a fragment. It had neither symmetry nor size.

"Can't stop here lookin' at that thing!" she exclaimed, and ran down the short, steep, brown stairs, and out of doors.

She picked a few nasturtiums from a little bed near the door, and pinned the stems to her dress, little appreciating how charmingly they set off her complexion.

Glancing at the hummocks of sand, she speedily tripped toward them, and ran up the yellow slope of the first one. She paused on its broad crest and looked off to see if the yacht had come back through those gray doors of fog. No yacht was there. Then down the sandy slope she ran swiftly, and out upon the beach. Her boat was where she had left it. But what did she spy by its side? It was something white. It looked like an envelope. How came it there? Uttering a little cry of surprise, she picked it up and read,

"*Mr. Atwood Gilmore,—*
To introduce Mr. John Keating."

Was there no post-mark upon it? There was not even that illegible trace of one to be found on envelopes sent out from slovenly offices failing to keep their stamp clean. Was there not a note inside?

"I'll take a peep!" said this modern Pandora. This envelope was a mere husk. It was empty as any of last year's seed vessels. Just the dead, dead husk; the seed, the life, the note gone. The sound of an approaching step arrested her attention. She looked up and saw a tall, lank boy, perhaps a year older than Kitty. He had a beaked nose, and black eyes that looked at one slyly, quizzically. There was a faint moustache-line breaking out on his upper lip, and it suggested the need of a towel rather than proved virility. It was Bill Hawkins, the son of a rich farmer in the neighborhood.

"Ha—ha!" he cried. "Who looks pretty as a posy? Going to a fair?"

It was a snaky voice. His utterance was intended to be pleasant, and yet one might have expected to hear a hiss after it.

"To a fair? Not if you are goin'," was Kitty's prompt reply.

"Oh, you are too bad!" he said, in a tone of mock complaint.

Here his curiosity was aroused by the sight of the envelope.

"Oh, what have you got there?" he asked, curiously.

"Oh, nothin' for the public," coolly answered Kitty.

"Nothing for the public! I don't know about this secret correspondence. Who's that feller you been a-rowing 'round this half-day?"

"He was not a feller, Hawk's Bill."

This maddened him!

"Your gran'sir ought to know about it—Miss Kitty! Shall I tell him?"

Kitty was a good deal aroused. Must she control her feelings, stay there, be civil to one that was so uncivil to her? If she stayed, she might say something she would regret, for Kitty's tongue sheathed a sword when she wished to draw one, and she knew it and she herself was somewhat afraid of the swords-woman.

"I must go up home now," she concisely remarked, and coolly walked off.

Bill watched her. He was swelling with wrath and yet his admiration for the girl restrained him.

"A pretty tigress!" he murmured. "Who

can tame her? I know though it is all the doing of that chap she has been a-rowing 'round. I wonder where he has gone!"

He looked sullenly yet covetously toward the hummock she was proudly, gracefully mounting, and then he walked off in the direction of his father's broad acres.

Kitty neared her home. She wondered who the boy might be that she saw leaning against the northeastern corner, his back turned toward her.

"Who's that?" she asked one moment.

The next, she was saying aloud, "Why, that is Phil! He was so dressed up, I didn't know him.

He turned as she neared him, and his eyes lighting up in their customary, expressive way, he called out, "That you, Kitty? I declare if I knew you at first."

"That's the very thing I was saying of you. What—what are you up to?"

Then Kitty laughed in her musical, careless way, one rich peal following another like silver bell-notes.

"Me up to? What are you up to, I want to know? I've got on my Sunday clothes, and I guess you've got on some of your'n."

"Come into the house now, Phil. Don't

let's make fools of ourselves more'n we can help."

But they were not going to escape so easily.

"Ben to—meetin'?" asked a voice that was pleasant but was too worn and old to have silver bell-notes in it.

Kitty and Phil looked up.

An old man helped by a cane, slowly hobbled out of a little shed. It was Skipper Tobias Tolman, known as the young people's "Gran'-sir." He had long cared for them, their mother having died when Phil was a babe, and their father's habits interfering with the support of his children.

Now that gran'sir's old helpmeet had ended her patient services and was granted a rest in an easier world, Kitty was keeping house for gran'sir. Phil was the only other member of the household.

Gran'sir now repeated his question, changing its tense, "You goin' to meetin', childun?"

"Why no, gran'sir, there is none to-day! Phil and me have only been round here."

"Wall!" he exclaimed.

His tone meant that he was not satisfied with the answer. What else could she say? He tried again.

"Why—why—you spectin' cump'ny?"

Phil looked at Kitty.

She was biting her lips and blushing.

He came to her relief.

"Why, no, gran'sir. Did you think so cos Kitty and me been a-fixin' up? Oh well, gran'sir, we jist did it seein' we wanted to. That's all."

"That ain't all," gran'sir thought. "I can see through a fence when there is a knot-hole in it, and suthin's to pay."

Kitty, behind gran'sir's back, was beckoning to Phil.

He slowly followed her up-stairs into her room.

"There, Phil, shut the door and laugh!"

The door was shut and the laugh followed. Then Kitty untied the blue ribbon and tossed it on her chest of drawers.

"What a fool I am, Phil!"

"No more than I be, Kitty!" said the chivalric Phil, bound to stand by Kitty and share everything with her, and this thing too, even if it were a piece of folly.

"Well, Phil, what did you fix up for?"

"Why—why—I dunno! I somehow saw that man, you know, and he did look so nice and talked so well and gave me money for a book——"

"He did?"

"Yes, he did. He gave me a dollar, fifty cents for rowin' him and fifty to buy a book with——"

"Why, Phil!"

"But he did—and—and—well, I guess I felt same as you did. My clothes didn't look good and I felt that I didn't know much, and—and I wanted to be somebody else and——"

"So you put on your Sunday clothes! Oh, Phil! But I did the same, or most the same! and to think gran'sir should see us! And he gave you a dollar?"

"Yes, he did; I didn't want to take it, but he is one of that kind you can't seem to git away from. And he wants me to buy a book for school. Guess he don't know how little I'm goin' to school! I told him I went sometimes."

"And what of me, Phil! Horrors! Oh, I s'pose he thinks us a dreadful set—ha—ha!"

Kitty's sweet dimples were coming and going as she laughed, like birds out of and into their nests again.

"Kitty, didn't that man pay you? He's mean if he didn't."

Phil's tone was indignant.

"He offered it, but——"

"You didn't take it?"

Kitty shook her head.

"—or—or—Phil—he laid it down in the boat, but I did not pick it up. What do I want his money for? Next thing he'd tell me to buy a book for school. Guess I know much as most of 'em round here, Phil."

He was proud of Kitty's boatmanship.

"I know you do, and can beat 'em all, girls or fellers of your age, when it comes to row-in'——"

"But I don't know as I shall row any more."

"You won't? Why not row?"

"Oh, I'm sick of it."

"What for?"

Kitty made him no answer.

"Oh, I would, Kitty. Why didn't you take the money?"

"Because I didn't want it, and it is in the boat now."

"In the boat?"

"Yes, if Bill Hawkins didn't take it."

"Bill Hawkins?"

"Yes, he came along the impert'nence!"

"He don't know nothin', Kitty. I'm goin' down to see if the money is there."

"No, Phil, don't you go. I don't want *his* money."

Her tone was so peremptory that Phil did not leave his seat on a box which, roughly carpeted, served as chair and lounge.

"Oh, what a fool—two of 'em!" thought Kitty, going to a window.

She opened it and looked out. The air blowing from the sea fanned and cooled her cheeks. Standing here, she chanced to thrust her hand down into her pocket.

"Oh, that envelope! Phil, see here!

She read to him the superscription:

"*Mr. Atwood Gilmore,—*
To introduce Mr. John Keating."

"What—what is it, Kitty?"

"Why, I found it by my boat when *he* had gone."

"Do you think he is *the* Keatin', Kitty?"

"Or the Gilmore? That bothers me."

Phil looked at the envelope.

"I'm stuck too, Kitty."

"Now was *he* the John Keatin' who wanted to see somebody, or the Atwood Gilmore, the—the——"

"'Tother man!"

"That's it, Phil! Oh—oh—what did *he* say to you?"

"Well, he wanted to know how old I was

and if I went to school, and then he preached quite——"

"Preached? Do you s'pose he's a minister?"

"He ought to be, he talked so fine. He spoke about folks havin' a power in 'em not aroused when young, not brought out, and so on, and if they had gone to school, it would have been better, you know, and he didn't want me to make a mistake, and I told him I wouldn't if I didn't have to dig so many clams——"

Here Phil thought Kitty would "die a laffin." She shook and shook again the peals of laughter out of her throat. It was a bell throwing out its rich notes.

"Oh, I'm so glad you told him that. You were bright, Phil! See here!"

Kitty's tone changed suddenly; Phil's face sobered as he watched his sister.

"It makes me mad, Phil, to hear rich people give advice to—to—us poor ones, and——"

"Kitty, are you mad with *him?*"

"Well, I dunno, Phil!"

She looked away, not daring to meet the interrogation in his dark eyes.

"I want *him* to be careful, Phil."

"What did he say to *you?*

"Oh, Phil, he said we ought to make the most of ourselves, and all that mess, but I give him good as he sent."

"What did you tell him?"

"When rich people make the most of themselves, then it is time for poor people to begin. Wasn't that a good one?"

Phil did not reply.

She was expecting he would applaud in some way.

"Don't you think so?"

"Y–e–s," said Phil, unwilling to desert Kitty in any position she took, "and yet——"

He thought of the handsome young man who gave him the dollar.

Kitty seemed to read his thoughts.

"Oh, you see he gave you money, Phil."

"Yes, but——"

"But what?"

"You know he is sick."

She was silent. Phil had answered her effectually, touching deeper than he knew, even a place far down in that big woman-heart that Kitty carried in her bosom.

She continued silent so long that he interpreted it as significant of a desire to have him leave. So he stole softly away. One of the

first places he visited was the boat, to hunt up that coin.

"I don't want it, but I don't want somebody else to git it. I'll make Kitty take it," he murmured.

There was no half-dollar in the boat!

"Then it is stolen!" he thought. But who was the thief?

This he could not answer. He stayed by the boat a little while and looked off upon the water, wondering where the yacht had gone,—the stranger also. How far would she sail? Then he thought of what the stranger had said, how some people would have done better, would have been more in the world, if a power within had been brought out. Were they not like ships that would make much better voyages if they had different motive power?

"Yes, how much further they'd sail!" thought Phil. "They'd git to rich ports and bring home good cargoes."

How far would he sail in life's voyage? How much of a cargo would he, Phil Tolman, bring to port?

There is no power that can disturb and uplift like an idea. The solitary boy on the beach was feeling the disturbing, uplifting power of an idea.

CHAPTER III.

THE IDEA WORKING.

"HE said, 'we ought to make the most of ourselves'—oh dear!" sighed Kitty Tolman, going to the window and looking out.

She inquired who was making the most of himself or herself in that neighborhood? Any one in the black little houses she could see, or in the life-saving station that she could not see? As for Bill Hawkins, he was making the least, the worst of himself, Kitty thought. As she noticed a clump of buildings beyond her, fish-houses near the shore, though they were inanimate, she felt like questioning them and asking them what they were doing? Were they not old and wearily leaning, one or two threatening to fall? Then she looked farther away to Sandy Creek, whose still, dark waters stretched out like a pavement of porphyry. Across the mouth of the creek, went a dam, firmly closing up that orifice, part of the day, but the rest of the time this mouth would be

noisy enough as if volubly talking, for here were gates or lips that opened and closed with the tide. Nearby, was an old tide-mill. With a violent rush the waters of the creek could have burst upon the wheel in the basement of the mill—and then what a rumble and rattle and roar would have followed! This would have happened if "the mill was a-goin'," as people said, but this property of one Boardman Blake was now idle. The weather-beaten old building stood like a seedy vagrant, halting there at the creek's mouth, his hands in his pockets, idle to-day and always wishing to be idle.

"I'd like to know if that old mill is makin' the most of itself," thought Kitty.

She was now led off into a meditation upon any possibilities of the mill's usefulness.

She thought awhile and then said, "Time to be gittin' supper," and went down into the little kitchen.

At the supper-table, very little was said, and that little was not said by Kitty. She was persistently silent. This was strange. Meal-hours generally overflowed with Kitty's volubility. She would chat away about the sea, the life-saving station, the village, the light-house at Seal's Head, and "folks."

Her grandparent in surprise watched her. She knew he was watching her, but took no open notice of it and ate away in silence. After supper she "cleared up the things," but still in silence. Generally, it was hard to say which made more noise, the dishes or Kitty's lively tongue. This night, the dishes had no competitor. When this task of dish-washing had been completed, she went to the back door and saw the sun slowly sailing like a big golden balloon down toward a thicket of pines, waiting to catch it and impale it. As she watched the sunset, she noticed a church-spire, two miles away.

"That is the spire *he* spoke about," she told herself.

Turning round by chance and looking within the house, she saw gran'sir hobbling on his cane to a shelf and taking down a worn, leather-covered Bible. Then facing another direction, she called out to Phil in the rear of the house:

"Come, Phil; time for prayers!"

Phil's genius as a jack-knife artist was trying to coax out of a piece of pine the hull of a ship. He did not fully fancy Kitty's interruption, especially as she had not in the past been very particular about "family prayers."

There was too in her words the tone of a kind of pharisaiac reproof. As she sounded it, "Prayer-time" when expanded would have been continued thus:

"You are always late, Phil! Come in at once, my son!"

"Seems to me you're dreadfully 'ticklar all of a sudden," he muttered, as he passed Kitty.

She made no reply.

Gran'sir was reputed to have a gift at "prayin'." He was a "master-hand" at this spiritual exercise and it was said that his prayers "took holt" of people. It "took holt" of Kitty that evening. In his prayer, he pictured a vessel out on the sea, the rough waves pounding her, the fickle wind often changing, and as often perplexing the captain. Then into the hands of the Lord, gran'sir committed the tossing vessel and all on board. Kitty thought of the yacht and of the strange young man who had gone aboard, and around him and around the vessel, Kitty saw the prayer of gran'sir stretching like a harbor's enclosure.

After prayers, Phil went out into the yard and worked on his "ship." Kitty's voice suddenly startled him:

"Your great-gran'sir, folks say, was a good deal of a man."

"What, Kitty?"

She repeated her words.

"What did he do, Kitty?"

"Oh, he owned the mill and ran it."

"Did he, Kitty? Well, I dunno what that has got to do with me or with me more'n you."

"Women don't run mills."

"They can if they want to—if they can git one."

"If I was a boy, I'd have that one on the creek."

"Say, Kitty, what are you drivin' at? Why don't *you* run a mill? You have strength and you have gumption——"

"If folks saw a woman, they'd say——"

"Then you git some of our great-gran'sir's clothes and put 'em on and go round and say 'I'm Great-gran'sir Tolman! I grind corn,' and——"

Here Kitty laughed. It was a genuine, honest, hearty laugh. Phil now began to laugh. Kitty went up to him, laid one of her well-shaped hands upon him and declared:

"Oh, you're a good feller, Phil."

"And you're a fust-class gal, Kitty."

Then Kitty went into the house and passed up stairs. Gran'sir now came to the door.

"Gittin' too dark for you, Phil?"

"Most," said Phil, still bending over his work.

As gran'sir's remark did not bring Phil in, he slowly made his way out to Phil.

"Eh—Philip—what's the matter now with Kitty?" gran'sir asked in a low voice.

"Thinkin', I guess."

"That all? I thought she might be sick or suthin'."

"Oh, I guess she is well enough."

"I hope she is. That laff sounded nat'ral."

He then went back to his rocking-chair in the kitchen, muttering: "It is the fust nat'ral thing the gal has done or said sense I saw her a-rowin' that strange feller round."

And Phil was saying to himself, "Gran'sir didn't ask me if anything was the matter with me."

He speedily went into the house, and the rear of the home was solitary and still through the long, chilly night.

CHAPTER IV.

A PROPOSITION.

TWO days after the above events, Kitty went to "the Centre" of the town. This village was two miles away and clustered about the church whose spire Kitty could see from her home. She went to do a little business for the family. She was quite successful in the management of a flock of hens, and every two weeks she would pack a basket with eggs and trudge off with them to a store at the Centre. Sometimes on a very busy day at home, she would wait until the close of an early supper, and then take her walk to the Centre. In that case, she was quite likely to stop at a relative's over night and start for home early in the morning

This present trip to the store had been in the evening, and after a night's tarry at her relative's, she began her walk home. She vividly remembered this return. She came to a swell of land from which she could look off at the anticipations of sunrise in the east.

Under a heavy pall of leaden cloud was a band of bright orange. It was a belt full of expectant light. The sun had not showed its disk, but there was a constant sharpening of the light and Kitty was expecting any moment to say, "There's the sun!" It was a growth of light to which the old Latin-derived word for dawn, crepuscle, would well apply.

Against this flaming promise of the day stood out a lifeless apple-tree, a twisted, misshapen, scrawny thing. Suddenly beyond the withered trunk of the tree broke the sun out of its concealment; then rising, swelling, its fiery globe rolling up, till across it stretched the bare branches like veins trying to absorb some life from it, and so this dead thing become once more a living fact that would be clothed with green leaves, be sweet with blossoms and some time hang thick with pulpy fruit. Kitty looked as long as she could and then turned her dazzled eyes away, murmuring, "Hard to make a dead hope live! If once dead, it is gone! It is like that tree that nothin' can make live again. Hope may die and we die too—ugh!" This morning's reflection was not agreeable. She turned the subject out of doors and hastened on.

"I will go home by way of the dam at the

old mill. I can walk across the top of the dam, I know," was Kitty's thought. She could trip lightly across the wooden crest of the dam and could even stop in the centre and look down on the brown, sea-weed-draped tide-gates swinging back as the sea knocked for admittance, and then swinging forward when the waters, hearing a strange call, inaudible to human ears, might turn and obediently go seaward again. Not every girl's daring was equal to the passage, and not every one's nerves were steady enough to permit that halt in the centre and that steady look down to see how fared the tide-gates. "That Kitty Tolman can do anything," was a universal opinion in the village.

When she now reached the mill, she sprang upon a platform projecting from it, passed round in front of the building and looked into a dusty, cobwebby window.

"A pity this thing isn't a-goin'!" declared Kitty, withdrawing her eyes from the dusty panes. Then she went away busily thinking. "Why not?" she said aloud. "Why not? I think it can be done." Soon after, she exclaimed, "Yes, I will ask him this very mornin'—soon as my work will let me."

Boardman Blake was sitting that forenoon in

an old red-armed chair on the platform projecting from the mill. At certain hours in the day this was one of his favorite retreats, for the shade was there on the platform and the sun was not. As he had nothing special to do by way of business, his resources now being sufficient to permit a life of leisure, he would often come here and sit out on the platform and meditate. He would tip his old leather-bottomed, red-armed chair against the wall and fold his hands contentedly in his lap. There was a smile of drowsy satisfaction on his open, kindly countenance as he felt the cool sea wind gently stirring his gray locks. It was a smooth, unshaven face, showing every wrinkle and every dimple. It was an honest, trustworthy man that people found under Boardman Blake's gray locks, in whose character was a certain simplicity in its best sense, combined with shrewdness. He might fail to interpret character, and his confidence in a neighbor's good intentions be wrecked on the rocks, but another wreck in the same place was not at all likely. He was a person of large experience and he did not forget what he had experienced.

As Boardman Blake sat in his comfortable chair out on the mill-platform, the wind stif-

fened and drew vigorously through several holes in the wall of the mill, evoking a mournful, sleepy kind of a melody. Boardman felt the power of the seductive notes. His eyes closed altogether. His head dropped lower and lower. In response to the wind, there was a snore from the man in the chair.

Suddenly, Kitty came tripping over the dam and stood before the sleeper.

"Massy!" cried Boardman, rubbing his eyes as a form stood before him and said gently, "You, you sleepin', Uncle Boardman?" Opening his eyes wide, he exclaimed, "How you scat me!"

"Oh, did I? I am—I am real sorry, Uncle Boardman."

"No offense, my dear——"

He looked at her in a vague, sleepy way, and then it came to him that something was on Kitty's mind.

"What can I do for you, my child?" he asked, in a parental tone. Then as if he felt he had not duly regarded her years, he said, "How you do grow! Most a woman!"

It seemed to him, that forenoon, as if Kitty had been away from home for several years, closing up her childhood, and had now come back to stand on the threshold of womanhood.

He was suddenly conscious that she had grown in body and into her face had come the thoughtful look of mature years. Boardman and his wife had always been much interested in Kitty and Phil, but during Boardman's service as keeper at Seal's Head, to which reference has been made — his wife keeping Boardman company—the boy and the girl had grown very much. The young people had been accustomed to say "uncle" and "aunt" to Boardman and Lydia Blake, though the right to use these titles rested on nothing save the fact of a neighborhood friendship. When any trouble might come to the young folks, and a counselor or arbiter outside of the family might be advisable, their language would be "I'll ask Uncle Boardman or Aunt Lyddy."

Kitty had now come to Uncle Boardman as to a great tribunal that could issue a most weighty and final opinion. Sometimes when, flushed with enthusiasm, she might have a proposition to make, she would abruptly approach her subject and perhaps startle by her directness and force. Then, she might have the caution of a diplomatist, and she would come to her subject very carefully and discreetly. She might act as if this being, one Boardman B., were a stormy fortress to be mined, and the ap-

proaches would be those of the miner feeling his way very cautiously underground. Kitty was now the diplomatist coming forward prudently, the sapper working along in the dark to capture this stormy fortress, one Boardman Blake. She began:

"Don't you think it is a lovely day, Uncle Boardman?"

Here Kitty poised her well-shaped chin on her finger and submitted the important weather question to B. B.

"Why, yes, Kitty, that don't need arguing one bit!"

"And this view——"

Here she faced the harbor and the stretching blue sea, above which rose the gray shaft at Seal's Head.

"Why, you ought to call this place 'Sea-view' and not the 'Mill at Sandy Creek.'"

"I don't know as I have got so far as to say the 'Mill at Sandy Creek,' I say the 'old mill' gen'rally."

"But it is quite a good mill, Uncle Boardman."

Kitty looked up respectfully at the roof.

"Ain't her blue eyes pretty!" thought Uncle Boardman. "Yes, Kitty," he told her, "it's in a tol'able condition."

"I have heard gran'sir say how much corn has been ground here some days——"

Uncle Boardman now was fully awake. The older he grew, the more he shared in some seniors' growing disposition to tell how far back they can "remember." What is a printed book, a history of a place, some musty chronicle of a distinguished person, compared with the memory of an old man or an old woman who directly out of the deep things of their experience bring wonderful treasures! Uncle Boardman began:

"Why, Kitty, I can remember——"

Kitty's eyes snapped with delight. He took it as a compliment to his great, far-reaching memory, but she said to herself:

"Now that I have started him up and set him a-goin' like his old mill, I can come to my point sooner."

"Yes, I can remember, Kitty, when I was young and my seeing a long string of carts a-coming to this very mill. I have seen 'em almost by the hundred——"

Uncle Boardman, Uncle Boardman, your good genius says, be careful!

"Why, they would string down the back road, then cross the mash by that bit of cart-path and stand waiting their turn. Tobias

Tolman, your great-grandfather, was the miller then. He was a tall, big man. He wore a great, long apron——"

"Did you ever wear one, Uncle Boardman?" suddenly inquired Kitty, with an innocent air.

"What, me? I never ran this mill."

"Oh!"

"You knew that, Kitty."

"Why, how should I know that?"

"Well, as I was a-saying, I have seen Tobias Tolman just have as much as he could do, taking in grist after grist. Why, he would have his apron mealy and his wes'kut mealy, and his coat mealy, and his face mealy, and his hair mealy—ha, ha, Kitty, you never saw such a mealy sight!"

Here Boardman laughed at the thought of the tall, burly form of the old miller strown with meal from head to foot.

"No, Kitty, you never saw anything like it!"

"But I'd like to."

"Ah, I dunno, I dunno!"

"Uncle Boardman, say!"

"What is it, my dear?"

Here the young woman laid her hand gently on Uncle Boardman's firm, brown fist and said:

I'LL JUST UNLOCK THE DOOR.

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R L

"See! The tide is goin' out and the gates are shut, and there is plenty of water to run down the sluice-way and set the mill a-goin'. Wouldn't you just start it up for me?"

"Why—I——"

"Oh, yes, do! You start it up for me—us two you know—you and me—jest to see if it really will go——"

"Why, Kitty, I——"

"Oh, yes, do come! Now, I know you'll oblige me and——"

She had risen and was gently drawing on his hand. He too had risen, and half-resisting yet yielding, had taken a few steps, still saying,

"Why, Kitty—I——"

"Oh, yes, do come——"

"I don't know as I have got my key."

"Oh well, I can——"

"But I can't, if you mean to climb into a window."

"Oh, we will fix it. Haven't you your key? You look, please. That is a dear uncle! You know I love you so much."

"But Kitty, my dear—oh, I do feel something in my pocket. Yes, I have got it. Really, I didn't know as I had it. Well, it won't do any hurt to open the corner. I dare say it needs airing—I—I'll just unlock the door."

While Uncle Boardman was busily poking the key into the lock, Kitty turned and at some invisible person gave a look and smile of congratulation.

"It isn't very clean in here," said Uncle Boardman, pushing ahead as he threw the door back. "A dirty place to bring a young lady in——"

"Oh, that is no matter!"

"Full of cobwebs—real musty—and—Kitty, you see——"

"Now isn't it splendid! There is where the grindin' is done, I s'pose."

They were standing before the heavy stones that in other days had done faithful work, but were now solemnly still. All around the wooden frame, enclosing the stones and within the frame and over the stones, the spiders had spun their close bands as if in resolve that nothing should ever stir again. The mill was only a jail, the spiders the jailers, and the stones prisoners held fast by many fetters. Into the jail, though, had come Youth.

"Now this is where you start it up?" asked Kitty, approaching a heavy bar or joist projecting from the floor. The name "post" was given this. The spiders had thrown their fine-spun cords all about the spot.

"Oh, child, do you persist in wanting me to start the mill? Why, it hasn't been started—"

"Don't you trouble yourself! I'll start it."

Here she seized a crow-bar leaning against the post. The process of starting this old mill was very simple. The crow-bar resting as a lever on a block of hard wood, was inserted in one of the notches successively marking the post, and then this was lifted up. At the lower end of the post and attached to it, was a gate in the sluice-way. The raising of the post raised the gate and gave a free course to the stream of water. This rushed upon the wheel whose revolutions forced the grinding above.

Kitty did not know what to do with the bar, now that she had it, save that in a general way she believed it had something to do with the raising of the post.

"My!" suddenly exclaimed Uncle Boardman, at the same time clapping his hand upon his bald poll, "Where is my hat? I'll get cold in here, so damp and shut up."

It was welcomed as a final chance to get away from the tempter and he started for the door. But the tempter was too agile for him.

"Oh—oh!" she screamed, and sprang through the door. "You stay here!"

She was back in a moment.

"There! Now you won't catch cold from the wind out doors which you might have done, and I've got it all nice for you. There!"

She patted the hat down on his ample poll, while he stared at her in a funny, bewildered way. Then she seized the bar.

"There, child, tut, tut! All nonsense!" said Uncle Boardman, and he clucked away, meaning by the cluck an assertion of superior knowledge. "Let me have that if you must raise it. You are a persistent gal just like Aunt Lyddy! wonder what she will say to this caper."

Boardman's stout, fat hands grasped one end of the bar. He inserted it in one of the notches of the post. The lower end of the bar rested on the block of hard wood.

"Eh—ugh!" groaned Uncle Boardman. "Don't believe she will go."

"Oh, yes, she will. There! Let me help you!"

She grasped the bar. What a contrast between the two sets of hands! Uncle Boardman was grunting again:

"Er—er—now! All together, my hearty! There!"

The post that had been held down by so many spider-webs, slowly went up and was held at this new level by a prop.

"Hark!" cried Kitty. "The water must be goin' through the sluice-way, and runnin' on the wheel—hark!"

Faint and low came a sound from the foundations of the mill. You might say it was a subdued groan from the spirit of the mill-wheel, that had been confined all these silent, inactive years in the damp, grimy, slimy recesses below, that weary and worn did not want to start again on its monotonous, periodical toil.

If this were a protesting groan, it was a musical one. It was like the hum of the wind starting up in the forest pines, or the whisper of the breeze in the ship's rigging, growing, growing, growing, when the sound of a human voice broke in upon this noise of the aroused mill-world!

"Oh—oh—look!" cried Kitty in delight, clapping her hands, and dancing over the dusty floor. "The stone is turnin'! The stone is turnin'!"

Yes, the big grinder, breaking away from all its fetters of webs numberless, was actually revolving! The lace-work of the spiders, spun so many days through the long summers, was in ruins, and the mill was "a-goin'!" The floor shook. The dusty beams creaked. The

old building shivered. Yes, the mill was "a-goin'," "a-goin'!"

It seemed as if Great-gran'sir Tolman, wearing his long meal-strewn apron, might appear any moment and go to the door to see that string of almost a hundred wagons and scratch his head as he wondered how he could ever take care of so much "grist." Uncle Boardman now stepped forward as if to hush all this clatter and rattle and rumble and roar.

"Oh—oh!" pleaded Kitty. "Don't stop it! It's so nice!"

"But, my dear, we must go home——"

"I know it—but——"

"Are not you satisfied?"

"Why don't you run it all the time?"

"What a question! You growing crazy?"

"No—no!"

"You don't mean it?"

"Yes, I do."

"Kitty, do you really think I could do it? Do you know that I would have sometimes to come here in the night, for you must follow the tide, and——"

"Oh, I think Phil could spell you all you need. He's real handy. He's strong. You can depend on him. I know he could do it all alone after a while."

The diplomatist had now reached the long-coveted never-forgotten point in all this interview. The miner had at last touched the foundations of this stubborn fortress, Boardman Blake, and the noise of the mill was the prelude to the final collapse of his obstinate will.

"Kitty, Kitty, you *are* crazy, I know. I run this mill—the idee! Guess I'll stop it now!" said Boardman.

He was resolute and Kitty saw it. He withdrew the prop that sustained the post and down it dropped. With the post dropped the gate. The wheel below ceased to revolve. The mill-stones were like two immense hands that restfully folded one over the other after a tiresome activity. The mill was still.

Now, it was Kitty's turn to "start up." She at once was "a-goin'."

"Say, Uncle Boardman! Won't you start up this mill and let Phil help you, and——"

She had taken his hands into hers as if she were "Uncle Boardman" and he "Kitty Tolman."

"You can pay him what you please, but you see he's not makin' the most of himself—just doin' nothin' you might say—and the mill is doin' nothin'. We ought to be makin' the

most of our opportunities and the mill is not makin' the most of itself——"

"Kitty, you take my breath away! You talk so, they'll have to send you to Congress. You don't really—really mean to have me start up the mill?"

"Why, yes, I do?"

"You haven't had this in mind all the time you've been talking with me?"

She smiled and nodded her head.

"What a Kitty! No, you're a Pussy, full-grown!"

"But you'll think it over, won't you?"

"Oh, yes! Got to! I must tell Aunt Lyddy, you know, where I've been all this time."

He smiled and left her. He kept smiling. Now and then an exclamation broke from him! "Ha—ha, what will Lyddy say!—To think I should start up that mill!—B. Blake, miller!—Why, I told Lyddy I did not think it could be done. I was afraid the timbers would not hold together. And—and—I've done it. Oh, that Kitty!—Must make the most of ourselves and the mill must make the most of itself! *She* made the most of her opportunity!—Who has been a-talking with her?—She's a bright gal, that Kitty."

Kitty had gone with Boardman along the cart path over the marsh to a point where came a parting of the ways. To the left went a path to the fishing-hamlet, of which Kitty's home was a part. Boardman Blake trudged along in the road, followed by the old-time mill-teams, and he soon struck the high-way on which fronted his house, not more than an eighth of a mile away.

"Poor Kitty!" sighed Boardman, as he turned from the road into his yard. "I wish things were different in her family. She does not know what has become of her father. He left here three months ago and his vessel is lost, we know, but the crew were picked up, the story goes. Drink is Stephen Tolman's trouble. If he should come back without a penny, but minus his thirst too, 'twould be a better day than he has seen for long years. But who knows where he is? Poor Kitty! And Phil, bright boy! There is a cloud on his life until his father's drinking habits are over, supposing his father should come back! It's a bad thing this drinking business!"

After Boardman Blake had left Kitty, she went back to the mill-platform to get an article left there. It was a basket in which she had taken eggs to a family on the other side of

the creek. Starting once more for her home, she took out of her pocket that interesting envelope found the day she and Phil had rowed that stranger along the shore.

"There is nobody round," she murmured, "and I would like to see if I can make anything out of it. Let me see!"

She read slowly, for Kitty was not a quick decipherer of penmanship, "Mr.—Atwood—Gilmore to—introduce—Mr. John—Keatin'."

This had been examined about every hour, and the unfailing comment was, "Which one is it, Mr. John Keatin' or Mr. Atwood Gilmore? Phil says Keatin', for Keatin' would be likely to have it and show it to somebody, the Mr. Gilmore, whom he—John—Keatin' wanted to know."

She thought a moment and said, "It must be Keatin'. But there—" and this she had said every hour—"what do me and Phil care who it is? Oh, dear! What does *he* care for us?"

The wind had been stiffening the last half hour and was now blowing quite fresh. Was it not animated by a mischievous spirit? Gathering up all its scattered energy into a powerful gust, it drove at Kitty with such fury that it put into a violent flutter all the

folds of her dress, threatened to spin her round, and tried unceremoniously to whisk off her hat. She put up her hands to detain her volatile property. That moment, she carelessly slackened her hold on the envelope, and another moment away it went, skipping and dancing! While Kitty was busy with the bewildering wind, the note danced out of sight! "Where is it gone?" asked the astonished Kitty.

Up into the air to reach a cloud, mount its back and ride off on it? Down into the waters of the creek to be disgracefully drowned there?

Kitty searched the marsh on either side of the way. She peered into every nook big enough to be a net and catch this note astray. She ran back toward the mill and hunted as she went, although she knew the wind had taken the envelope in the opposite direction.

"Where have you gone?" she moaned. "Why don't you speak? Why don't you signal? Why don't you do something?"

Reluctantly she said, "I must give it up."

Slowly, she walked home. She had left the mill a short time ago, in a happy mood, tripping off gaily. She was now walking along, slowly, sombrely saying, "Too bad!" It seemed as if somebody had died. She thought

of the dead tree she saw against the sun, that morning. Was not that an ill omen?

"Too bad!" She moaned! "Why did I lose it?"

Why it was too bad she could hardly say. She knew the fact that she was disappointed. It was only an envelope, a bit of paper, and yet while she had it with her, it seemed as if she were keeping up a connection with some great source of help; some day the stranger, she said, might help Phil if the friendship were of no advantage to her. Already that acquaintance had stimulated her to use her influence to have the mill run and for Phil's sake. She recognized this. Was that all? What else might follow? Now the name of their helper had been lost! A friend had died.

"I'll tell Phil," she murmured. Then she said. "No, I won't!"

The next moment, she was asking, "Why not tell Phil? The envelope would have helped him; you are making too much of it for yourself. Why should you care to keep that envelope? What is that stranger to you? He has forgotten about you. You tell Phil!"

She took Phil aside when she reached home and told him the news of the loss.

He thought a moment. His eyes twinkled.

"I've got it. You come out into the shed, Kitty."

From a heap of drift-wood, he pulled out a shingle that had been swept ashore by the waves.

"Now, Kitty, before I forgit it, I'll put it down. I've got some chalk and I—I—well, I'm not much of a hand at writin' and I'll make some letters—so——"

When Phil had finished, the shingle was thus inscribed:

"MISTUR ATWOOD GILMORE TO INTRO-
DUCE MISTUR JOHN KEATIN"

"There, Kitty, I want to see that man ever so much. I hope he will be along again, for I took a big shine to him. I'll stick this up somewhere—oh, near that little winder! Now if we forgit, the name is there."

That night, there was a heavy rain. It swept through the little window, flooded the shingle, and wiped off half the letters. There was left this;

"MIST WOOD TRO-
D IS JO TIN"

CHAPTER V.

SHALL THE MILL BE STARTED?

THE next morning, Boardman Blake went to his back door and looked out upon a field that early summer had dyed with deepest emerald, and upon the green blades on which the dew had strung its delicate crystal beads. The sun was winking through the trees at the right, and as its rays touched the dew-drops, it changed them to colored lanterns suspended from green poles. He felt the beauty of the morning. The fresh pure air invigorated him.

"Well, well, this is a fine day," he said aloud, "and because it is a fine day, we must make the most of it."

"What say, Boardman?" asked his wife Lyddy, her dark eyes peering at him through her spectacles.

"Oh, I was only remarking in a general way that we must make the most of this fine day."

"I should say so too; a woman who has got breakfast to get and beds to make and rooms

to sweep and bread to bake and milk to churn and dinner to get——"

As she went into a closet, the door swung upon her and cut off the rest of her interesting sentence. About ten minutes after this, Boardman stepped into the front part of his premises. Here was a vacant store. In late years, business of a grocery nature had fallen off and he had become light-keeper. Coming home again, he returned to a snug little fortune left him by a brother, and he no longer felt any necessity for working for his bread and butter. And yet he was not satisfied with this inactivity. Something might come up, he felt, to reproach him for it.

This morning of the chapter, when he stepped into the disused store, how exceedingly empty it looked! He remembered what trade once centred here. How many barrels of flour and gallons of molasses and pounds of tea and coffee he had sold in this now forsaken, empty store!

"Really, something might be done here now," he soliloquized; "I could not do as I once did, but I might do something. It would accommodate some folks. It don't seem as if I were making the most of it. Wonder if Lyddy has had her thoughts upon the subject!"

These thoughts he expressed aloud. He

had not fairly pronounced the last word when a voice behind him said :

" Lyddy has had her thoughts, you may be sure."

Boardman jumped, " Why, wife, you gave me a real start."

They returned to the old-fashioned kitchen and sat down to breakfast. The coffee was temptingly odorous. The Johnny-cake sent up a little cloud of fragrant steam. Aunt Lyddy's doughnuts were an enjoyable dish and her husband as he took his seat, smiled at the brown heap of goodies.

" I'm ready, Boardman," said Lyddy.

This meant readiness for the blessing. Boardman always made such a petition at every meal. It was the same form of blessing, but it blessed. After his thoughts had been raised reverently to God, there was a little pause. Then Boardman was ready for the next step. This was the meal. He rubbed his hands, and said :

" Lyddy, this is a fine breakfast. I see that the tide is coming in, and if I'm going to the Centre by water, I feel like making the most of the tide."

Aunt Lyddy here put down the coffee-pot she had begun to tip. She then sat back in

her chair. She shot a sharp, lance-like glance at her husband through her spectacles, and then challenged him :

"Look here, Boardman Blake! What do you mean by sayin' so often 'make the most of it'?"

He always blushed easily. He specially blushed when charged with anything, a soft pink spot coming into each cheek, deepening and then spreading, till each cheek looked as if it had been stimulated by a mild mustard poultice.

"How many times, Lyddy, did I say it?

"You said it about the fine day."

"Oh, did I?"

"Yes, and you did not know it, I dare say. And about the store?"

"Did I? And about the tide?"

"Sartin. Now, Boardman, my advice to you is the most sensible thing said yet, and that is, you had better make the most of this breakfast before you."

Boardman laughed heartily.

"There is quite a long thread on that spool, Lyddy, and I will tell you about it and go back to the beginning."

As Boardman told about Kitty's method of laying siege to him there at the mill, how the

old building was waked out of its sleep and went to rumbling again and could have gone to grinding again if corn had been in the hopper, he watched with steady interest his wife's expressive face. He claimed independence enough to start off and do anything alone, but he had dependence enough always to prefer and ask for her coöperation. Theoretically, he could always act without her; as a fact he ever acted with her. As he went on with his story, he watched her face narrowly to see if she approved or disapproved of Kitty's suggestion. Signs of approbation or disapprobation, Aunt Lyddy would give promptly. If not pleased or if little interested, she would drop her head, perhaps sigh or give an impatient jerk of the head, or by an absolutely passive mood show an indifference which practically was as discouraging as opposition. How very different her appearance if she were favorably impressed! As Boardman watched her, he now saw the desired signs of interest.

"I thought I might as well give way to that young Tolman tease," continued Boardman, closely watching his wife, "and so I just ambled round to the door of the mill and threw it open."

Here Aunt Lyddy gave an approving glance

out of her spectacles, and smiled most beamingly.

"Then if you believe it, Lyddy," said the encouraged Boardman, "that young crittur wanted me to start up the mill! Start up the mill, I told her? Why, I did not know but the first jar of the heavy stones would bring the whole thing down. However I stuck the old bar into the post, pried her up, and whew! didn't the water run on to the old wheel and set everything to buzzin'! Kitty all the while was just as tickled as a kitten with your ball of yarn, Lyddy!"

Lyddy did not say anything, but the animated glances out of her spectacles were multiplied, and occasionally she nodded a smiling and positive approbation. A nod accompanied by a smile was of supreme significance, for it showed that Lyddy was in a highly favorable state of mind.

"And one thing more, Lyddy—of course I don't know what you will say to it—but Kitty's idea seems to be that we should make the most of our opportunities——"

A very emphatic nod of approbation from Lyddy!

"And she says—I don't know as you are ready for it—" here Boardman felt his way

along cautiously and watched closely his wife's face—"but she wants me to start up the mill—and run it——"

A nod of decided energy and a beam of great warmth! Into a whole fireplace of flame, a big old-fashioned fireplace, each glass of Lydia Boardman's spectacles seemed to expand.

Now if it was interesting to study Lydia Blake's face, it was just as interesting to watch Boardman's. He had often thought what an attractive study his wife's face at a family-council must be to any outsider by chance admitted to it. It did not occur to Boardman that a spectator might find his face even a more interesting study. If Lyddy did not respond favorably, then Boardman's face would cloud, the course of his words be slow and hesitating like that of a ship suddenly struck by head winds, and he would insert "I think it doubtful myself," and he would close perhaps with, "We need not settle the matter now but think it over, if we get any more light on the subject." He and Lyddy would be likely to come out at the same place, whenever a final decision was reached.

If Lyddy though were agreeable as she was this day, then Boardman's face would glow;

he would give a congratulatory hitch to his coat-collar; his voice would be decided and emphatic, full and resonant; a chuckle or two would be thrown in occasionally; he might rise and walk about and he would be likely to say warmly in closing, "That's good! I'm glad you like it!" He said this now, and said it in a corner whither he had walked and which he now occupied in partnership with the tall, seven-day clock.

Lyddy had one doubt to express. "I'm not so sartin 'bout one thing, and it is Phil's helpin' you. He wants to do, he is ambitious enough, but you know it has been sort of hard to place him, to know what he would do. You might try him."

"Glad you think so, Lyddy. Now the whole matter was a surprise to you, wasn't it?"

She shook her head and softly murmured, "No, Boardman!"

"You knew it then?"

"Yes."

"Why, how?" asked the astonished Boardman.

"Bill Hawkins came along this morning and I says—'What news?' You had gone out into the barn. Bill says, 'Guess your husband is a-goin' to start up the mill.' Now, I wasn't goin' to let that feller get ahead of me and

know more than Lyddy Blake about family matters. You know Bill thinks he knows more than anybody else about everything—and so I said nothin'. I kept my tongue between my teeth and let him talk on. That's a good way when people talk about suthin' new, to let them talk on and they'll talk out all they know and give you credit for knowin' as much as they do. 'Who's a-goin' to run it?' says Bill. 'I thought you said he was,' I told him. 'Oh,' he says, 'I s'pose he'd have somebody to help him.' 'Do you want the chance?' I says. 'Me?' he says. You ought to have seen his look, as if I really thought the boy whose father owned three hundred acres would want the job! Oh, I told him, if Boardman Blake started any mill, it would be a job that wouldn't sile anybody's hands, and for some, meal was dreadful cleansin'. I tried to be wise as a sarpint and harmless as a dove and I remarked kind of careless that I wondered if the story about the mill was round much. He says, 'What Kitty Tolman knows to-night, all the world would know to-morrow mornin'!' I didn't like his sassin' Kitty, and I says 'Some folks in this world would have to know a good deal to know as much as Kitty Tolman.' He left then."

"Now," asserted Boardman, walking energetically up and down the floor and almost bumping against the clock, "Now, it is all explained. It is easy enough to see through a grindstone even, provided there's a hole in the middle of it. While Kitty was with me in the mill, lookin' kind of sideways, I saw somebody's shadow in the door. It was a sharp shadow, for the sunlight was strong, and it was crooked like a hawk's beak. A person trying to look in and bending over, would make that kind of a shadow. When I turned clear around to the door though, nobody was there! In about two minutes more, I saw Bill Hawkins walking on the beach. That is how it all came out. He knew about it and told it."

"Well named, what the boys call him, Hawk's Bill!"

"The shape of the shadow just like his nose!" affirmed Boardman, in a very decided way. "Oh, he was round pickin' up things and then he scattered the story."

"Oh, quite a number of people know about it and even more than you do. Bill had not been gone two minutes—you were out in the barn—and two men called and wanted to know your charge for grindin'. Bill told 'em, I know."

"Don't see but what, Lyddy, I've got to go into the business now, any way, whether I want to or not."

"Well, go into it. Make the most of your mill, and see here! Come this way, Boardman!"

She led him out of the cosy, home-like room that was both kitchen and dining-room, into the vacant store. One moment she turned and silently looked upon the empty shelves, bare counters, unoccupied bins.

"Now Boardman, I've got hold of your idea and Kitty's too, this makin' the most of things. Now, I know we can't bring back the old days when we traded off groceries so many of 'em, and you can't anyway if you run the mill; but see here, Boardman, I can curtain off a little square place from the rest of the store, put in a stove in winter, and inside the curtain make it real snug and cosy. I can jest start a small sort of—well—sort of fancy goods and knick knack store, pins and needles and calico and cotton cloth and candy and so on—why Boardman, I know we are gittin' old, and most folks would say we were that already, but there's a lot of grit in us yet, a lot of life, yes, and a lot of fun, and why not do what we can? Why not help along the world with what we've

got, settin' people to work, givin' em a chance to earn a livin'—and mebbe—I can work Kitty in—and—and—have her for clerk!"

It was Uncle Boardman who was now a fascinating study. It was interesting to see how he responded to Aunt Lyddy, his eyes shining, a big smile spreading over his smooth face like sunshine over the still waters at dawn, his head nodding, his hands working, till at last he could restrain himself no longer, and he shouted:

"Lyddy, give us your hands, my dear!"

Away they went, skipping across the room, making the floor shake and the dust fly, till suddenly Aunt Lyddy gasped:

"Oh—oh—old Square Woodridge is at the door—a—lookin' in!"

Out into the back room they flew and closed the door behind them. Silence and a cloud of dust in the store! Boardman soon stole round to the front of the house, apparently as if he had come from the barn, and there stood not old "Square Woodridge" with two sharp eyes and a hickory stick, but Philip Tolman.

CHAPTER VI.

WHERE PLACE HIM?

PHILIP TOLMAN was something of a conundrum. He was a boy almost sixteen, a year younger than Kitty, stout and muscular. Kitty and Phil had some points in common, but in others there was a marked difference. He was more deliberate than Kitty. She saw quick and acted quick. He was not so sharp in his perceptions, but when a subject was once opened to him, he made rapid progress in searching it out and mastering it. His eyes would twinkle and his whole face would brighten. His lips would part, his white teeth shine, and all his air was that of a fascinated listener. Gran'sir and Kitty knew this process as "Phil brightenin' up." While Kitty was quicker to-day than Phil, what about their work on the morrow? Kitty's course in the future while uncertain enough, was yet more definite than Phil's. People often said, "Kitty will make a good leader."

She was that already, but if educated, she would lead in various directions. She would make an energetic business woman, a skilful doctor and an enthusiastic, capable teacher. All that was needed was opportunity, a chance for an education, for she was very ignorant. And that need is the lack of many. It is opportunity that may make one life a garden, the lack of it may leave another life a desert. One of to-day's problems is how to make one child's opportunity as good as another's. The State through its free schools tries to do something; it should watch for chances to do more. It is sad sometimes to see the inequalities of life that are not the fault of those who are lacking. It ought to be everybody's pleasure to see to it that all inequality is reduced as much as possible, that a poor boy as well as the rich one has a golden opportunity set before him. In Phil Tolman's case there was something back of the question of opportunity. It was first of all, direction. Toward what object should his powers be directed, granting that he had an opportunity for their development? What could he make and what become, even if he had a chance to make and become something? There was much uncertainty about Phil's development. It was true physically.

It was quite evident that Kitty would be a woman of average stature but of more than the average beauty. It was not easy to prophesy Phil's stature, while his strength was undoubted. People once said, "Phil is goin' to be a tall feller."

Half of them kept on saying so, and the other half now shook the head and declared, "Wall, I dunno!"

It was a question whether Phil would be a handsome man, though people at times said roundly, "That Phil is a-goin' to be fine lookin'." He did not have Kitty's eyes of sparkling, sunny blue. Phil's were dark, and at times they had lustrous depths, while again they might be dull and without power. Then if certain features of his face did not lose in refinement as he grew older, he would make all that prejudiced folks like Kitty hoped for. The good looks though of a boy may be spoiled as he matures, because the material rather than the spiritual develops, and the features losing refinement grow heavy and coarse. You could not say of Phil at his present age whether he would grow up coarse and heavy of feature, or show that refinement of face his looks sometimes promised. Then it was hard to determine in his life-work what path of activity he

might follow. Boys of the neighborhood generally grew into fishermen, half of the year stamping around in long cow-hide boots, and the colder half some of the men were shoemakers. Not very often did they take to the open fields and scratch the ground for a living. Phil could catch fish, but he was apt to think how it hurt the fish when they were suspended on the hook, and he might throw down the line saying, "I don't enjoy this." Kitty would laugh at meal time, and as she set a savory mess of fish before him, ask if it would hurt him to eat one. He did not eat as if in pain. Gran'sir was a shoemaker all the year round, these later days of his lameness, and he had taught Phil how to put a shoe together. "Dull work!" Phil would tell himself. "When the thing is done, somebody buys it and jest walks in the mud with it. See, how it seems to dirt my hands already! Ugh! I will wash it off at the sink."—"See how it sticks!" he would mutter afterwards.

Neither did Phil enjoy what his grandfather called "carpent'rin'."

"Well, Phil," Kitty had said, "I don't think you care to be a carpenter, for you always pound your fingers and make them black and blue. And you don't like tradin'."

Kitty could trade. She rather enjoyed the taking of one penny and then seeing if she could not make the first penny bring home a second.

One day, Kitty said, "Don't you want, Phil, to pick some berries up on Great Hill and sell 'em at a store?"

Phil succeeded in picking a quart. He ate the most of his berries on the way to the store, and ashamed to trade off the remainder, he gave the small remnant to the storekeeper's little boy and girl. The next day, Kitty picked two quarts, traded them off for molasses at the store, turned the molasses into sticks of candy, and sold them to boys on the beach, taking home with her fifty cents as a final exchange for her work out in the pastures of Great Hill.

"Now I couldn't have done that," said Phil, when he heard of Kitty's success. "It would have been like me to eat a lot of the candy and then give round the rest."

"Sir Philip, if you have your livin' to earn," Kitty told him, "you mustn't eat nor give, but sell, sell right and left, yes, sir!"

Phil did not have a very good chance to attend school. His teachers noticed that he generally had some opinion of his own about a

lesson and his comment might be original and entertaining; but he did not acquire with special ease and he was not classed as a superior scholar. If he were interested in a subject and it once were opened to him, he would look far into it. Interesting subjects though were rare, and he could not spend much time in school. There was bread to be earned.

"What am I goin' to do with myself?" he would sometimes wonder. "Fish, farm or make shoes? I haven't much learnin' neither." He would shake his head in perplexity.

A boy deserves our fullest sympathy if he be in this discouraging uncertainty. Many reach it and it may be a fetter to hold them down, for months, if not years. We must find something better than our pity for the young folks, even our help. Phil merited Kitty's title for him, "a home-body," but Phil had betrayed more than his usual interest in the outside world on two occasions; once when he went to a shoe-factory for his gran'sir, and again when he travelled off to a woolen mill to buy for Kitty some remnants of cloth advertised as a bargain. It stirred him to see all the wheels stirring, to see one thing take hold of another and this process of manufacture going on in an orderly way from a beginning to an end.

"I like that," he said to himself at the factory and at the mill also.

He had like Kitty recently felt the stir of that idea of self-development which a young man had dropped behind him, little thinking what a ferment would follow the idea. Phil and Kitty had often discussed the subject.

There was besides Kitty one other person whose opinion Phil specially valued, and that was Boardman Blake's wife. He resolved, "I'll go up and have a talk with her and see if she knows of anything that a feller can git to do."

The very next day, as soon as it was convenient after breakfast, he went up to have an interview with Aunt Lyddy. When he appeared at the store door and was taken for "old Square Woodridge," who went about leaning on his hickory stick, Phil was in a mood, his head bowed, thinking about his home, his gran'sir, Kitty, and what a boy could do to help along the family.

"Jest like me—a-goin' to the wrong door!" he murmured, and when Boardman Blake found him, Phil was blushing so badly that his crimson cheeks suggested hollyhocks, and the bees might pardonably have made a target of those blushes.

"I—I'm sorry I got to the wrong door. I knew you didn't use this, Uncle Boardman."

"No matter! Now come round to the right one."

"Could—could I see Aunt Lyddy?"

"Sartin! This way! Lyddy! Lyddy!" Uncle Boardman began to shout as he caught a glimpse of his wife, "don't be embarrassed because a young man wants to see you!"

When Phil saw the breakfast-table still in the floor, the hollyhocks began again to bloom in his cheeks.

"Oh, I'm sorry I got here so soon!"

"Now, Philip Tolman, take a cheer and don't say nothin' about that. Boardman, come into the store, one minute!" He followed his wife promptly. "You willin' I should speak about the mill to Philip?"

"Oh—ah—ah—would you jest advise it?"

He was like some other people who starting and approving a theory, shrink a little from its actual execution. His wife had more executive force, and would move with despatch when he might hesitate.

"Hadn't we better think it over a little while longer, wife?"

"Think?" said the energetic Lyddy. "It's the 'do' that you want now. I'm goin' out this

forenoon to buy stuff for a curtain to curtain off the store, and buy a few articles to start with—candy, say, that's excellent—some fancy fixin's like calico, pins and needles, and, oh, some chewin' gum! Yes sir, right off!"

Boardman smiled. "All, right, Lyddy! I like to see your interest. You are good to lean on, a real good backbone——"

"I like some fore-bone too, Boardman. I believe in goin' ahead."

"Good, Lyddy, good! I believe in Lyddy Blake, ha-ha!" And Boardman patted her affectionately on the back.

"Now, Boardman, I'm goin' to start up my mill right off—'fore night, if all I do is to set out a table and set out some candy on it. Yes, my mill is a-goin' to hum to-day. And what about yourn?"

"All right! You speak to Phil, and I'll speak to Tristam True, the millwright, to come this afternoon and look the buildin' over and have her ready."

"Git him afore dinner, Boardman, if you can. My motto is, 'Right off, and the sooner the better!'"

"W-well!" replied Boardman, running his hand helplessly across his bald head.

He was only a fallen pine bough, swept

along before the freshet of his wife's energy. She remarked:

"That is right. I'd harness up right off and s'cure Tristam this forenoon. I want to see Phil alone, for I know he has suthin' on his mind."

Uncle Boardman went off with the air of one whose intentions had been hurried along faster than he anticipated.

"He only needs to be chirked up to it," thought Aunt Lyddy, watching Boardman from the window until she saw his round head actually disappear inside the barn-door. Then she went along a little back entry to a door into the yard. She opened the door and listened.

"Come, Billy!" she heard her husband call out to the old family-horse. "Come, sir! Out of that stall! You and I have got a whole mill to start up in less than twenty-four hours. Now be spry! Lyddy Blake is a-moving and we must be moving too."

"Good!" chuckled Aunt Lyddy. "Now I'll go back and find Phil."

He was easily found.

"Aunt Lyddy!" he pleaded. "You let me help you clear up. I did not mean to come so soon——"

"Not too soon; we are late up here."

"Let me help you clear up."

"You want to help?"

"Oh, yes! Do let me! I help Kitty at home. We have real good times together, she bossin' and wipin', and me washin'."

"Wall, you may; I like to see a boy handy."

Aunt Lyddy's spectacles began to cloud and her black eyes had a subdued look, for she thought of the time away back in another generation when a small brother used to stand by her side, "a rompin' girl," as she classified herself then, and what a "prime dish washer" he was!

The dish-washing in Aunt Lyddy's kitchen had only begun to make its pleasant domestic music, when Phil said:

"I don't want to bother ye', Aunt Lyddy, but I'm sort of stuck to know what to do in this world——"

"How old be you, Phil?" Aunt Lyddy abruptly asked him.

"'Most sixteen and Kitty is goin' on to seventeen."

"I don't see how at sixteen one can always tell what it is there may be for them in this world."

"I know that—and yet I dunno—I've been

thinkin' it over for some time—and I'm stuck. You see I'm gittin' older!"

After this last, aged, solemn remark, Phil looked awhile in silence out of the window.

"How much he looks jest as his father looked 'way back in his best days!" thought Aunt Lyddy. "Dear me, where is that man? Time for him to be a-gettin' home from sea if he's a comin'. And may he come sober!"

Phil was speaking: "You see one thing that has sort of brought this thing to my mind is that I've been a-growin'. Some people say, 'You're most a man,' and then somebody else hollers at me, 'You'll be a tall one,' and I say, 'Wall, I—I'd better be gittin' something stiddy to do.' But that don't start me so much as old Square Woodridge when he bawled at me one day; he says, 'You've got your growth!' Then I says to myself, 'If that is so, you're the same as a man, and you'd better hop round lively,' but I don't know what to hop on to! To tell the truth, I don't enjoy fishin' or farmin' or shoemakin', and I don't care to be a sailor, and Kitty says when she sees me with a hammer, 'Now don't pound your fingers, Phil.' I guess as how I wasn't made for a jiner—I don't think much of tradin' neither, that is for me. I'm always afraid of cheatin' and that spiles

the fun. Some folks say I musn't be partikler, but I must be partikler and——"

Here Aunt Lyddy shot a question across the pathway of Phil's words: "Of course! Do you think you'd like to go to school? Now I think eddication is a great thing. I never had much myself, and I tell Boardman who has a nat'ral love for books, that he must study for both of us. And yet sometimes I wish I was a gal agin, jest to study, jest to git suthin I never can have now—no—never."

Aunt Lyddy looked off solemnly as if she were inspecting the depths of a grave.

"Oh, Aunt Lyddy, you're smart. You *think*. That's the great thing, to think."

"I spose I do some thinkin'——"

"And actin', that's the biggest thing."

"Phil, you're a comfort. Still, I want you to go to school."

"I've thought of that soon as I can earn some money. I'd like to go to school, though I never have stood at the head of my class."

"Folks that stand at the foot are the ones that need the schoolin' most," was Aunt Lyddy's remark, intended to be encouraging, though based on a discouraging assumption.

"I don't stand at the foot, Aunt Lyddy—when I'm in school—but I'm some ways from

the head. Yes, I think I'd like to have more schoolin', but school is not keepin' now."

"How long have you been thinkin' 'bout this, Phil?"

"Oh, some time, more or less, but lately it has been a-comin' to me a good deal. A man was talkin' to us—me and Kitty—and——"

"Who was it?"

"That's what we don't know. Only a stranger on the beach and he gave me and Kitty a job of rowin'——"

"What did he say?"

"Oh, that there was something within us, a power, and it ought to be brought out, and that we ought to make the most of ourselves—"

"The very idee that has been runnin' off with Boardman," said Aunt Lyddy, setting down with energy her dish-pan. "And it's a good idee, I'm sure."

"Kitty's a good deal stirred up, and this mornin' it was my turn to clear up—we take turns you know—and this mornin' while I was takin' my turn and clearin' up, she was up-stairs 'improvin' her mind,' as she calls it, readin' a book and practisin' at writin' in a book, makin' letters you know."

"She'll make her mark in life; that's one thing she'll make."

"I don't believe I will," said Phil, despondently.

"Oh, yes, you will. It takes some time to make your mark—that is, a good one. It is like writin'-lessons; some sort of a mark any one can make. A good one, a good one takes time."

"My great-gran'sir made his mark, Kitty thinks so."

"And I know so. You mean the miller?"

"Yes'm, the miller."

"I can remember him. Yes, he was a good deal of a man and made things hum at the mill. I can see him now, all meal-dusty. Now, as for the question, what you will do. I think that question will settle itself. We can't do everything at once and you're too young to settle things much. What you want to do is to watch your chances and as an openin' offers, jump for it—jump lively—and jump into it! That is it. Don't spend all the day in watchin', but take up some of the time in jumpin'. Folks what hold back and say they're on the lookout, and yet never jump for a chance, will never land thar. Now have it all in view, that you want to do what you can and will do it, as that man told you. Now I'll be a-lookin' out for ye, and Uncle Boardman

will, I know. In the meantime, take what chances you can, and then jump for suthin' better, as suthin' better offers. Now I want to speak of one thing. As we've been a-sayin', your great-gran'sir was a miller, and your Uncle Boardman may be a-goin' to open the mill—I mean is a-goin' to start it up—and how would you like to be his assistant and help him?"

"In my great-gran'sir's mill?" asked Phil, his eyes twinkling, his face "a-brightenin'" as they sometimes put it at home.

"Yes, I mean your own great-gran'sir's mill! That's the one! The very one!"

Phil's dark eyes were now "twinkling," his face "brightenin'" fascinatingly.

"I should like that fus'rate."

"Until you can git some schoolin' or see a better chance to jump for and jump into. Wall, you think it over. There will be some hard work, Phil——"

"Oh, I won't mind that."

"It's a tide mill and it must go with the tide, and if business should git lively, there must be some runnin' by night."

"Oh, I wouldn't mind that."

He was now occupying one of Aunt Lyddy's comfort-giving stuffed-chairs, but he quit his

comfort suddenly, springing up and declaring with force:

"Now, I'll go home, and I'll be ready for the mill jest as soon as I hear from Uncle Boardman."

"That is right! Take up with your present chance and go right along. Be anxious to make the most of everything as it comes along and suthin' better will be sure to follow."

She went with him to the door. She looked at him sympathetically and then gently laid her hand on the boy's shoulder.

"Phil, there is one thing you must do if you want to make the most of yourself."

"Wall, I do," he said earnestly.

"If we want to make the most of ourselves, we must put ourselves into God's hands that he may do for us what we never can do for ourselves."

He looked up into her face as soberly as she was looking down.

"Don't forgit it, Phil! Try, Phil!"

"I won't forgit and—I'll try," did he say?

He was not ready for the effort, and he was very honest in his statements. He was unwilling to express himself beyond what he felt.

He only said:

"I—I know that," and dropping his head, walked slowly away.

Aunt Lyddy's thought sank down into his heart and sank deep, for it was a big thought, heavy with value. But many things heavy with a rare price sink down into our souls and lie there at the bottom of the sea, pearls that may be neglected till some storm shall heave the deep and bring from the bottom the precious but neglected things there. Far better if we voluntarily bring them up, like the pearl-diver who anticipates the storm and brings from the ocean its buried treasures.

CHAPTER VII.

THE FACE AT THE WINDOW.

KITTY TOLMAN was sitting in the kitchen at gran'sir's, patiently knitting a stocking and busily thinking. The day's work at Aunt Lyddy's was over, for Lyddy Blake had carried out her thought, and while Phil went to her husband's gristmill, she took Kitty into her "tradin'-mill" and made her a clerk in the little store recently opened. There was not much to be done in the evening. Kitty would remain until the Blake supper had been dispatched. Then Aunt Lyddy would come into the shop and Kitty would go home.

It was a very chilly evening. A fire had been kindled on the broad hearth at gran'sir's. The whirr of the draft and the crackle of the fire and the smart, self-important tick of a small one-dollar clock, made a sound of life there in the brown-walled kitchen. Otherwise there was little manifestation of vitality. Gran'sir invariably after supper took a big old family

Bible and seated himself in his low-backed rocking-chair, and began to read. As invariably, he would fall asleep. Just where he was on the road to Slumber-land, Kitty who sat behind his chair, could tell by the level of his head. When his bushy head of gray hairs rose high above the back of the chair, she knew he was appreciatively reading "Bless the Lord, oh my soul, and forget not all his benefits," or some other impressive exhortation. But when she could just see his gray hairs above the back of the chair, she knew that he had got to the end of the chapter and was resting. It might be that this side of the chapter's close, the old pilgrim had fallen asleep.

Phil was in the kitchen also. He did not go out and mingle very much with the boys of the neighborhood. He and Kitty were the children of a woman who was an importation, still remembered as "the New York lady," having come from New York city. That was the reason why Kitty and Phil were thought to hold themselves a little above the native-born element in the fishing village. Kitty and Phil were not aware of any exclusiveness, and yet as a matter of fact they were much at home. Kitty was there because she was "busy," she said, and Phil because he liked Kitty's society

better than that of any boy in the neighborhood. So he spent his evenings at home, but whatever he might start to do, he would end in the same delightful Slumber-land whither gran'sir was such a frequent traveller.

"Gran'sir has gone!" said Kitty, looking up, from her knitting. "And Phil too! There they bow and bob to one another like two senseless blocks. I'll let them sleep. I want to be still."

As Kitty sat in silence, knitting forward, her thoughts went backward. It seemed now an age since she and Phil had met with that strange young man who had so aroused them out of the old, dull, thoughtless, careless life. She wondered where he was. She could see him looking, hear him talking. She was sorry she did not behave better, but he had surprised her.

"I—I'm sorry. I wish I could see him," she told herself. "I should like to tell him what I'm doin', that I'm helpin' Lyddy Blake keep shop, but what does he care? Oh, dear! Keepin' store is better than my watchin' on the sands for a chance to row folks."

Kitty felt that she had made an advance, that when she became a clerk she went up a round on the tall ladder of "Making-the-

most-of-yourself." The clerk-round might be lowly but it was higher than the "rowin'-" round. Back to her old vocation in her boat, she felt that now she could not go, continuously at least. No, she had put her feet on the clerk-round. Knitting patiently before the purring fire and the ticking clock, in the presence of those two silent, nodding forms, she indulged in a self-complacent dream of prosperity. What if from clerk-round she went up to proprietor-round, Aunt Lyddy giving up the little shop and Kitty keeping it? In course of time, what if her business were so successful as to outgrow the little shop and grow into another and a bigger one? Though Phil disliked "tradin'," he might be a decent success if he were taken into the firm. Then what if in the wake of this "Tolman & Tolman" effort, there should come houses and lands, fishing-boats and tide-mills? And what if he, that stranger, should come again? He might try to hunt up a barefooted girl and her brother as shoeless as she, but he would not find them. They would be occupying perhaps Bill Hawkins' father's house and owning the wide lands of Hawkins, Senior. What a fine reception the stranger would have, and how impressed he would be by these proofs of their

success in making much of themselves! Yes, they would have climbed some distance up this tall ladder "make-the-most-of-yourself." As the fire whirred and crackled and the dollar-clock made its self-important tick, Kitty seemed to be going higher and higher up that ladder. Suddenly, chancing to look at a window near gran'sir, she saw an object at whose discovery the fire seemed to go out, and a strong hand pulled Kitty down from the ladder.

It was a man's face! He held his two hands above his eyes and so began an inspection of the room, his head swinging as on a pivot from gran'sir's side of the room to Kitty's. Kitty did not recognize at first the face, for it was not sufficiently turned toward her. Gran'sir, if awake, would have seen it was the face of one curious to know who was inside—a face under a shabby hat, the face of one who had met with temptation and sadly fallen, a face intensely regretful if not in despair.

The face slowly swung from the right of the window to the left, Kitty's side. It passed gran'sir and Phil also, two unconscious figures—and how stupid seemed their unconcern in such contrast with his pitiful concern!

That swinging face! So slowly revolving!

It was now turned toward Kitty's side of the room. The eyes so dark, so despairing, so suddenly looking out of the night, were fastened on Kitty. She saw who it was! The face went like a flash! She sprang to her feet. One moment her cry, "Oh, father," rang through the room!

Gran'sir and Phil stirred in their chairs and sleepily opened their eyes. They caught the echo of her startled cry and saw her rushing from the room.

"What—what's the matter?" drowsily asked gran'sir. Phil could not tell him. Phil though sprang from his seat and chased after Kitty. He did not know what the matter was. It was enough to see Kitty on the run, chasing or chased by some trouble. He obeyed his first impulse, to run after her.

When he was outside of the house, uncertain which way to go, he made out a figure rushing through the dark. He chased it round the house, round the shed, only to bump violently into it as it turned about and suddenly came back.

"Why, Kitty!" said Phil, shocked into a sudden, involuntary halt.

"Phil, Phil, did you see father? Oh, where is he?"

"Father? No, I didn't see nobody."

"Yes, he looked into the winder."

"Father?"

"Yes—yes—go——"

"Children, what's the matter?" called a voice from the door.

"Oh, gran'sir, it's father!" screamed Kitty, "and I'm goin' to hunt him up."

As she spoke, she pushed by the bewildered old man, reached after her red shawl hanging near the door, wound its folds about her shoulders and over her head, and then ran out again.

"Phil, you go up the beach, and I'll go down—and——"

Kitty was off without further explanation.

"I don't see what good it will do," murmured Phil.

He went up the beach, for Kitty was one to be obeyed. He saw nothing, save the outlines of the shore in confusing shadow, and he heard nothing save the steady breaking of the surf along the sand. When he reached the house again, he found the door open, but the kitchen was empty.

"Gran'sir has gone too!" he inferred. He went to the door.

"Kitty!" he called in clear, ringing tones.

"Ph-i-l-l!" came back Kitty's voice, growing nearer, nearer.

"Nothin', Phil!" she told him.

"And I found nothin', Kitty!"

"Hark!"

They heard the sound of feet shuffling in a hurrying, irregular gait.

"Poor old gran'sir!" whispered Kitty to Phil.

He came hobbling along and reported "Nothin'!"

They went into the kitchen that so recently had been such a scene of security and peace. The fire was out. The clock on the mantel was dumb. The lamp on the table was smoking badly. Gran'sir dropped into his old chair and sorrowfully bowed his head. When he raised it again, he said:

"Tell me all about it, Kitty!"

She told everything; about the face so suddenly coming to the window, about the hands held above the face and how it slowly swung from side to side of the window.

"You—you sure it was father?" asked Phil.

"Why, yes, and I saw too that lock of hair falling down over his forehead—the way it always drops down."

"Oh, it's him!" groaned gran'sir. "Nobody else has sich a heavy black lock droppin'

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down that way. It's him, and where he is, no one knows. You can't find him and 'twould be foolish to hunt. Only he said if he got home and—he—was—no better—he—he wouldn't—stay."

Gran'sir's voice broke down entirely. He had a tender place in his heart for his Steve. He did not think of his son as a tried, tempted, drink-cursed man, but as a laughing boy with a frank, trustful, happy face. Nothing was said for some time. Gran'sir sat with still drooping head, his gray hairs falling in a tangle. Kitty looked at Phil and Phil looked at Kitty, each face in painful solicitude. Gran'sir at last raised his head.

"Fetch the Bible!" he said, in hollow tones.

"We have had prayers once, Gran'sir."

"I know it. Fetch it agin, Kitty."

Gran'sir's manner changed when it lay in his lap. In slow, solemn, clear, and impressive tones, he read:

"'Lord, thou hast been our dwelling-place in all generations. Before the mountains were brought forth or ever thou had'st formed the earth and the world, even from everlasting to everlasting, Thou art God.'"

Kitty thought of a mountain rising up sol-

emnly, protectingly overshadowing the spot. It was good to have the mountain's strength so near her weakness. She was not as yet moved by any profound sense of spiritual need. She did not read her Bible. She did not pray. To-night, however, she was deeply touched. She was glad she was near someone who could pray. She never before appreciated that it was well to be in the shadow of the mountains of the divine strength. Then gran'sir's chair began to scrape the floor. In his lame condition, he could not touch the floor lightly, but dropped heavily upon it. In broken, tremulous tones he said:

"Our Father, who art in Heaven!"

No matter what the occasion was, this was always a part of gran'sir's petition. The sun might shine, or the clouds darken; the west wind might bring in spring-time the scent of apple-blossoms from two trees near the house, or a wind from the northeast might carry with it the wintry breath of the salt sea scattering the blossoms; the fishing-boats might be lifting their wings to a fair, happy wind and all pushing out upon the ocean, or some tempest might throw upon the beach the fragments of a wreck—it was always "Our Father;" and to-night how gran'sir did pray for the little home

and the one without a home! It broke Kitty down and yet she was soothed and comforted by gran'sir's prayer. Why, she could not tell. It was a new experience. She wondered at it.

They all went to their poor, humble little rooms for the night. Soon Kitty heard a voice at her door.

"Kitty," said Phil, in a whispered tone, "I—I'll stand by you. We—won't give up. We will stand together."

"You are a good boy, Phil," and Kitty kissed him tenderly.

Then she added something, that a little while ago she did not know she could have said:

"And—we—will stand by father, too."

"Yes, we will," said Phil, heartily.

"That's good, Phil. We won't give up."

When Kitty was tramping fiercely, wildly down the beach, trying to find her father, she exclaimed:

"Oh, how foolish to be thinkin' you can rise and make anything! That Bill Hawkins sassed Phil only yesterday and asked him what he and his father expected to do a-puttin' on airs, and Bill called us New Yorkers—wasn't he right? What business have we to try to climb ladders?"

Pressing on, trying to find somebody, reaching, nobody, calling out, "Father!" it seemed every moment as if a hand were striking her. Now swinging a hammer, it was breaking up her hopes, or brandishing a knife, it was cutting down her ambitions and aspirations. Each time, the hand was a father's.

"What's the use?" she muttered. "What's the use to try to do anything? It don't pay to be good or to be anybody."

And when she had turned to go home, looking up into the sky, it seemed as if she saw a proud ladder falling down through the stars, her ladder with all its boastful rounds, and she almost expected to hear the sound of a crash.

But by the time she had bidden Phil goodnight, she was in a different mood. That old elasticity in human nature, sometimes defined as vitality, sometimes challenging our attention as a recuperative power, sometimes asserting itself as a sense of right, of fitness, but ever putting on the bright robes of Hope, had come up out of the depths of a girl's warm, loving, strong heart. Was that all? She had heard gran'sir pray. Did she not feel his spirit? She now went to her window and pressed her hot face against its cool panes.

She would accept this new throw of destiny. She would do her duty by her father when he might appear again, as he probably would, and claim a place in the home. But hark!

She raised the window softly. She had caught the sound of a softened hum of the surf upon the sands. It increased when Kitty raised the window. It became a rich, full monotone, and how musically it fell upon Kitty's ears! It always had affected her peculiarly and pleasantly. And now it soothed her like the voice of the dead mother, whose body rested in the village cemetery. When Kitty lay down to her nightly rest, she still heard this hushing voice of the sea, and she seemed rocked to sleep upon a loving breast. She fell into a restful, deep forgetfulness.

CHAPTER VIII.

DOES HIS GREAT-GRAN'SIR VISIT HIM?

AS people said, the mill was now "a-goin'." As one might be walking by the waters of that vast inland sea, Sandy Creek, it was pleasant to catch the low, pleasant, steady hum of the mill. Instead of dismally closed doors, it was a goodly sight, that open entrance-way, hospitably wide. A bag of meal might be leaning against the door-frame, as if to get up strength against that trying, exacting time, the hour of grinding. Then one might hear the lively rattle of wagon wheels over in the little road to the mill, while somebody on foot might shout to the driver, "Goin' to mill?" The driver would shout "Yah," and cluck to his horse that he might shoot ahead and come up to the mill door with suitable *éclat.*

All this gave a look of business to the neighborhood. Thrifty souls spoke of "trade as revivin'," and of "our town" as "a-lookin' up."

It has been said that Uncle Boardman did not know if the old walls would hold together when the mill might be started up, but Tinkham True had examined the venerable structure, had done a little patch-work, and with a wise air said, "I think *she'll* do."

Was not that enough?

Tinkham was an old millwright, and the only one in the neighborhood. It did seem as if his spirits, if not his health, had been affected by the long-continued inactivity of the mill. But when he received an order from Boardman Blake "to look over the mill and put it in decent repair," his spirits were affected, even as the thermometer by a warm wave, and there was "a going up" at once. He raised his drooping head. Smiles came to his solemn visage. Tools in hand, he went whistling toward the mill. Gran'sir Tobias Tolman made a special hobble to the mill that he might with his own eyes see the great work going on. It was a hard effort for Tobias, with his "rheumatiz," but he was anxious to see any change at the old mill his father used to run. Then Tobias Tolman wanted to see Tinkham True. Close friends were they, though far apart in personal appearance. Tinkham was tall and slender, while Tobias

was short and thick. Then, while Tobias was decidedly hirsute, heavily dowered with gray hair and a gray beard, Tinkham had a smooth-shaven face, and the top of his head was hairless as a cannon-ball and shiny as a new silk hat.

"Wall, Tinkum, so ye are to work agin!"

Tinkham turned toward the shouting voice and stout form in the doorway.

"That you, Toby? Come in old boy! Come in and take a cheer! Yes, I'm to work!"

"Glad to be a settin' down in the old mill agin, thankee!"

Tobias had taken the only chair to be seen in the mill, but it was not the only chance for the seating of any other poor rheumatic pilgrim that might arrive. There was a bench, brown and whittled and covered with dust. Though unoccupied, the old tattoed relic looked social.

In the intervals of Tinkham's hammering, the two cronies would talk.

"All alone, Tinkum?"

"Jes' me and the rats."

Pound—pound—pound!

"Rats roun'?"

"Sartin! I've had to fire my hammer at 'em more'n once or twice even. Big uns!"

Pound—pound—pound!

"Don't see what they've got to live on here, Tinkum."

"Praps they're livin' on anticipations like some folks who spect a fortin' or an office."

"Dare say! Wall, Tinkum, it is good to see signs that things are goin' to be a hummin' here."

"I know it, Toby, and your boy—grandson—they say is a-goin' to tend mill."

"Yes, I b'lieve him and Boardman struck up a bargin."

Pound—pound—pound!

"Sort of nat'ral to have him in the bizness."

"I know it. I tell ye, Tinkum, I can see my father now a-comin' home from mill, his close all kivered with meal-dust."

"You ought to have follered up the mill."

"I would, but the trouble is, the mill wouldn't a-foller me — ha — ha! My father when he was old, had to sell the mill to raise some money. Guess you've forgotten——"

"Oh, yes, I remember."

Pound—pound—pound!

Tobias prided himself on his long memory, even as Tinkham was proud of his lofty stature. They were likely to suggest in a mild way one another's deficiencies. Tobias had

risen from his chair to knock down an old meal-bag hanging from a beam. He was ineffectually poking at it with his cane as he leaned on his chair. Tinkham sprang forward.

"Guess—guess, Toby, you had better lemme —you ain't so tall as I be—thar!"

With a flourish of his hammer, he brought down the dusty mass.

"When ye goin' to git at them mill-stuns and overhaul 'em?"

"I reckon they won't need it, Toby."

"And all right in the flume?"

"I think so. I'm 'bout through."

Pound—pound—pound!

The mill repairs being so near their close, it seemed as if conversation might also come to an end.

Tobias though had a subject on his mind;

"Tinkum, I say!"

"What is it, Toby?"

"You ain't seen nothin' of my boy?"

Tinkham ceased hammering.

"Steve?"

"Yes, Steve."

"Not a thing," replied Tinkham, solemnly. "I heard of him sort of startin' up suddenly— 'hind a—wall—sort of—then goin' way agin like a flash."

"He came and looked in our winders!"

"You don't say so!"

"He did, and it was in the dark and it looked skeery."

"Now, Toby!"

"But he did."

"And you see him with your own eyes?"

"I—I—I didn't——"

"Gone to bed?"

"N—no."

"Gone to sleep! I see."

Tinkham prided himself on his ability to see through things, and he said "I see" in a very complacent tone.

"Wall, Toby, what is he up to?"

"You see he is diskerriged. He said to me —solemn as an owl—'fore he went away, 'Fether, I'm comin' back a diff'rent man. I'm goin' to let drink alone. I don't mean to step in the house till I can be respectable.' You see he was wrecked while he was away and it took some time to git home and when he came, he came wrong. He had been drinkin'. I can see through it. Steve was a good—boy—once."

Tobias' voice was faltering.

Pound—pound—pound!

To relieve the embarrassment, Tinkham had

taken up his hammer again, but soon laid it down.

"Wall, Toby, I can't seem to think but Steve will fetch harbor yet and be a true temp'rance man. So I wouldn't take it too hard. Phil is a-comin' on, and I think he'll be a credit to ye. I'm goin' to give Phil some lessons in runnin' the mill you know."

"Yes, I know—guess I'll be goin'!"

The stout, hirsute old Tobias sorrowfully hobbled out of the mill. Tinkham watched for a short minute that retreating form and then nervously, nimbly began to pound again. He did not stop until he saw a small visitor stealing up out of a stairway that led from the damp, dark foundations of the mill, and peering round with its sharp little eyes as if to inquire what all this noise meant.

"Go hum there, I tell ye!" and after this order, bang went Tinkham's hammer upon the floor.

When the repairs had been completed by Tinkham, he gave Phil the benefit of a short apprenticeship in mill-running and Phil went to work as assistant-miller.

One day, Phil came down to the time-worn door of the mill. The strong sea-water sweeping through the gateway had filled the basin of

the pond. Then turning, the tide had accommodatingly shut the versatile gates. Phil raised the post and with it the gate down in the flume, along which rushed the water against the big, waiting wheel.

"Not much corn for me to grind to-day!" he murmured. "Let me see!"

The hopper held about four bushels, and from it along a shoe or trough, sped the yellow corn down into the "eye" or centre of the upper millstone, the "runner." Tinkham said this weighed about thirty-five hundred pounds. The lower or bed-stone was thinner, and it needed the arms of stout beams to hold it up. On this bed-stone fell the corn, and was promptly flattened and crumbled into a golden meal and whisked round into an outlet discharging it into little buckets set on an endless leather belt. Up, up would come these little buckets like patient brownies with hods of golden dust on their backs. Each brownie would tip his little hod and send out in a shower the golden dust, and then drop down, down out of sight, only to come up again with another patient load.

Phil found that the process of grinding exceedingly interested him. He wanted to inquire into all the mysteries of milling. Tink-

ham took him down to the fountain-head of the motive-power, "the wheel" in the mill's foundations. This was a turbine wheel studded with iron buckets and set horizontally in a box. The impulse of the water rushing against these "buckets" on the rim of the wheel, set it to spinning, and its strong, steady revolutions in the dark, carried round everything in the story above.

"I like to see wheels," soliloquized Phil, "something goin' round, and I like to see something comin' from the goin'. You put corn into the hopper and it comes out meal. And you have money for it; I like that. It would seem as if I might do something here! I wish that man would come along who gave me the dollar. I've got half of it now for a book sometime. I guess he'd like to see me earnin' something to put on top of that half!"

He not only thought of the young man with his friendly, magnetic influence, but there was great-gran'sir Tolman.

"Wouldn't he like to see some one of the family a-runnin' this mill!" thought Phil, smiling and chuckling.

So he heard the rumbling of the heavy mill-gear with satisfaction and was glad that Phil Tolman had become a miller.

Boardman Blake was now approaching the door. Phil's thoughts were so closely given to the grinding that he did not notice the approach of his chief. Boardman nodded and smiled to see the boy so thoroughly engrossed in his work.

"Ah, it did him good to lay a responsibility on his back," reasoned Boardman. "It made him stand up, just as a load on the head makes one hold that up. Yes, responsibility is good for making us. How Phil does take to it all! He seems so interested in machinery and in anything that will turn round and do things. Ha—ha!" Boardman silently exulted, rubbing his hands with intense satisfaction. He gave however one of his chuckles emphatically and that brought Phil's attention to his caller.

"Oh, Uncle Boardman, that you? Isn't the mill runnin' lovely?"

"Yes, lovely! Phil, I thought I would run down and ask you a question. When business is good, a mill is run of course at the night-tide as well as the day-tide. I don't mean though to have the mill run at night if I can have the business done by day, as I can't run it myself at night and I don't care to have you——"

"Oh, Tinkham will help me—he said he would—and I can, part of the time. Do you want me to run it to-night?"

Boardman smiled at the boy's readiness for duty.

"Not unless some more grist comes in and if it does, I think of getting Tinkham to run it an hour or so——"

"Oh, let me! You said you would some time. Have you spoken to Tinkham?"

"Oh, I won't unless the grist comes in."

"Then if it does, I'll run it. You let me."

"Well, you might try it a little while. We will see how it is."

Phil grinned and nodded his head. It meant that he had carried his point.

Boardman turned to the door and began the journey home. The mill kept on rumbling and grinding. The young miller kept on watching and overseeing.

Ere that tide had run its appointed course, more grist came in.

"I see!" said Phil. "It is a plain case. I must run awhile to-night."

About eleven, that night, Phil started again for the mill. He took with him an old lantern, so old that great-gran'sir Tolman might well have carried it in his day. Passing through

the fishing-quarter, he took a path that brought him into the narrow cart-way crossing the marsh.

"Tide in!" exclaimed Phil, holding his lantern over the water in Sandy Creek. "It is achin', I know, to start up the old mill, and I'll give it the chance."

He raised the post at the mill, and then came the sound of a splashing, a whirring, a creaking, a grumbling, a rumbling, and round and round went the old millstone!

"How much to grind? Oh, I shall soon be through. May take an hour or so! That is all!" he concluded. "That is good!"

On the broad arm of the only chair in the mill, Phil saw a dime that Boardman Blake had left behind, saying, "Every hour you run at night, Phil, you will get a dime extra. Here is one to begin with, and you let me know how many hours you run to-night and I'll remember you accordingly. Extra, you know."

It looked good, this bright silver dime on the arm-chair and flashing out a welcome as the light of the lantern fell upon it. Phil closed the door of the mill, and then filled the hopper with the yellow corn. The "shoe," or trough by which the corn ran from the hop-

per down into the eye of the upper millstone, could be raised or lowered by means of a string attached to it. This regulated the rate of the flow of the corn. Phil adjusted the shoe in accordance with directions given by Tinkham and then sat down in his chair to wait the slow but steady grinding.

Before the grinding to-night began, had he not heard a strange noise up stairs? He looked in the direction of a dark stairway climbing up one corner of the mill. This led into a big room which the rats tenanted, holding daily councils there, and, as they found below the materials for a feast, making the lower story a banquet-room. Phil had often wondered of what use that upper story could have been, but his great-gran'sir was not alive to tell him. The rats certainly gave no information.

"Rats!" he had said when he heard the strange sounds, and then gave his thoughts to the grinding. There was this satisfactory feature of mill life; the noise of the grinding was so loud and continuous that any disagreeable sounds, like the scampering of rats or like the wind wildly wailing about the corners of the building, all, all were overcome and put down and buried deep by the clamor of the mill's activity. It was grind, grind, grind, rumble,

rumble, rumble, roar, roar, roar, until the work was done, and the gate in the flume tightly closed. Phil was watching the hopper steadily, when suddenly he gaped.

"Sleepy, am I? Well, now, why not take a nap? I guess I shall be through my nap by the time the hopper is out," he reasoned. "Any way, I'll fill her up now, and then—may be, I'll take a nap when I feel like it."

He filled the hopper.

He returned to his chair.

The dime was still on the broad arm, and he was willing it should stay there. It was an open incentive to faithfulness and he liked to have it there in sight. To pass away the time, he took a slip of paper and a lead-pencil from his pocket, saying to himself,

"I'm not much at writin' and I'll print it jest as well as I can." He began carefully to set down these words in letters big if not symmetrical:

"MAKE THE MOST OF YORESELF."

After a while, he said, "I'll jest watch that hopper. I don't know as I had better go to sleep after all."

Now when in a drowsy state, one may hold his thoughts down to a certain object, but it

will not be likely to help him keep awake. I am aware of a case where a person, if wakeful in the night, induces drowsiness by this method; he thinks of and follows in thought the line of a railroad track. His wandering fancies are thus all brought home and set like baggage-cars to rolling along that one line of rails. Not a single thought is suffered to jump the track and go off into the woods or out into a pasture. Thus it becomes only one steady going on—on—on—on—there is a gape—on—on—on—on—another gape—on—on—on—the breathing is deeper, fuller, more restful—on—on—the traveller on the railroad track is asleep! If still going on, he is a somnambulist, in deep sleep, and no train will come along to run him down.

Phil held his thoughts to the contemplation of that stream of corn dropping from the nose of the trough—the toe of the shoe rather—and soon there came an ominous gape and his head dropped. He gave way to the mood, sank his head lower, supported it by his hand one moment and then everything sank, head, hand, and all, and rested on the arm of his chair. He was fast asleep, comfortably, luxuriously asleep.

Grind, grind, grind, boom, boom, boom,

went the mill. Was that the sharp, dark eye of a rat peering down the stairway in the corner?

Was the noise there the spring of a rat across a loose board?

"Fast asleep!" whispered a voice up in the darkness massed at the top of the stairway. "Guess I'll go down. I want to be off."

Down the stairway, softly, cautiously, stole a dark form. It came nearer, nearer, and then was about to tiptoe past Phil.

Why was it that Phil just then had a dream about his great-gran'sir? I cannot say, and if I cannot say, can anybody else solve the problem? It may have been because he had been thinking of his great-gran'sir, how he came to this very mill on dark lonely nights, lantern in hand, and set that turbine wheel to revolving. Phil certainly was soon dreaming of his great-gran'sir. Did the dusky, mysterious form stealing down stairs, have anything to do with Phil's dream? The great-gran'sir was wont to come down those very stairs, certainly But would the great-gran'sir have taken Phil's dime? This being saw the little coin. His dark eyes kindled at the sight. He reached out his hand, hesitated, drew his hand back, reached it out again—farther—farther—and

then swept dime and paper into his greedy pocket. Softly opening the door of the mill, he walked out. Phil slept on, dreaming of his great-gran'sir. It was a long dream. It came to an end; then after a while it started up again. Finally Phil saw his great-grandparent tumble into the mill-flume. This would have been too much for a wideawake man's equanimity, while a miller asleep could not help shouting in alarm, and Phil found himself on his feet, wide awake and horrified!

But where was he?

How dark it was!

And the place, too, was so still!

What place was it?

Hark!

Was that noise the wind?

Wind scampering over the floor and running against his legs?

He jumped, and stepped on something soft that squeaked frightfully!

He jumped again.

He saw something bright, shining down through a dusty window.

"A star!" he murmured.

He went toward it.

He struck a wall.

He felt along its surface and reached a latch.

He raised the latch, pressed open a door and looked out.

He saw a number of stars and a young moon curving its scimitar above them as if an oriental executioner were about to remove their guilty, golden heads.

Then he saw the reflection of the moon in water. Was his great-gran'sir down in the water?

"Bah!" he said, "I know where I am. I am in the mill. I got asleep. The tide has turned, and the grinding is over, and my lantern is out. Guess I'll go home."

When he came back to the mill, the next day, he wondered where that dime was. "I must have knocked it on the floor, or a wind may have come along and blown away the paper and dime with it."

He did not ask himself whether his great-gran'sir might not have stolen it.

CHAPTER IX.

HER PAY AS A BOATMAN.

WHILE one coin disappeared in the night at the mill, very soon another coin turned up, though not at the mill, and it was in open daylight.

Kitty came home from Lyddy Blake's shop one forenoon, and went to her chamber to find something she wished to work upon and that would be good for leisure moments at the shop. Suddenly she heard a voice below shouting, "Kitty! Kitty!"

"Why, Phil, what are you shouting for?" asked Kitty, going down stairs.

"I found something and I saw you come into the house and I ran in to tell you."

"What is it?"

He held up a half-dollar.

"What do you mean, Phil?"

"You remember the half-dollar you said that man, Mr. Keatin', left in the stern of my boat for rowin' him, and you wouldn't take it?"

"Yes, is that it?" asked Kitty, eagerly.

"You hold on a minute!"

A boy with a round, dumpling-face and benevolent blue eyes here crept in shyly and stood behind Phil.

"I was overhauling our boat this morning, and under the stern-seat, tucked out of sight, I found a half-dollar——"

"Oh, let me see it, Phil!"

"You hold on; Bill Hawkins was down there and saw me handlin' some money, and lookin' at it, said, 'That is a rare year'—he meant the time when it was coined and he says—'Give it to me and I'll give you another and five cents to boot——'"

"And you didn't let him have it, Phil?"

"Well," said the guilty Phil, blushing, "I thought if you could have five cents more—"

"That Bill Hawkins is always puttin' his foot into everything!"

"But don't you want the five cents? I thought it was so much gain."

"I don't want to have anything to do with that feller, or his money."

Phil laid the half-dollar and the half-dime down on the table, and looked regretfully at them.

"What hurt will Bill's money do?" he ventured to ask.

"I have so little faith in that feller, I don't like to have his money, or let him have mine. I'm afraid mischief will come of this."

"How?"

"Oh—if—well, I don't know just what—but I have that feelin'—I don't want his money anyway."

"Don't you mean to take it—it's yours, Kitty?"

"I don't want anything to do with it. I hate to touch money he has been handlin'."

The ashamed Phil gingerly picked up the two coins and laid them up on a shelf.

"I don't want them," he said and went out. The dumpling-faced boy followed him.

The next moment, Phil heard a voice affectionately calling, "Phil! Phil! Here a moment!" He went back.

"Phil, dear! I don't mean to be cross, but I don't want to have anything to do with Bill Hawkins' money. Something bad will come of it. Why, I had a dream last night and thought he said you and me stole."

"He did?"

"Yes, he did."

"I'd like to have him prove it."

"He can't, but who was with you when you found the money?"

"Tony Watkins. He was here jest now."

"Did he hear Bill make you an offer?"

"Yes."

"Then we can call on him for a witness. That is all."

Phil again moved away, saying to himself, "I can't but think, Kitty, you wish you could have seen that Mr. Keatin's money—or what is his name? I wouldn't have listened to Bill if I had thought a moment. I am sure I don't like his money. It was all for Kitty. I did it to git five cents more. But there, I don't believe anything will come of it."

And yet the next week, Kitty read this notice in the county paper which gran'sir took:

"Lost, somewhere within a mile of the life-saving station, a coin—valued as a relic—a half-dollar. If found, send to

"Box 6, Rockingville."

"There, Phil, what did I tell you?" said Kitty.

"Do you think it was Mr. Keatin' that put it in, and he lost the half Bill has got? I'll speak to Bill, to-morrow, Kitty."

"And I'll write to Box 6 to-day, Phil, and ask for particulars."

It took Kitty an hour to pen her note.

She got an answer the third day. It was a very kind reply, thanking Kitty and saying the loser was a bungler and ought to have said where the life-saving station was; that he thought there was only one in the county, and it was ten miles from Kitty's home! The writer signed himself Dunstan Brown. Kitty looked disappointed.

"That settles that, Kitty, and as for Bill, I asked him if he would give up that half," said Phil, "and he said he would if he could, for he didn't care to keep it after all, but he couldn't give it up, for it had gone down in the shape of lemonade-drinks he treated a crowd of fellers to, one day."

Again Kitty looked disappointed.

"The guzzler!" declared Kitty. "Phil, give him back his five cents, do!"

"I will, Kitty."

"And the fifty you can have. I won't touch it."

"I won't," resolved Phil, silently.

There it lay on the shelf, untouched day after day.

"She—she'll want it some time," thought Phil.

He was a true prophet, though minus this name.

CHAPTER X.

CHAPTER IN THE LIFE OF A DIME.

WE have had a look at fragments of the history of two half dollars; what about the dime stolen one night from Phil?

When the thief had pocketed the coin and its accompanying slip of paper, he left the mill and walked across the timber-work cresting the dam. The moon helped him, but he told himself he could successfully go across in the dark now. He stopped when half-way over, and looked down at the water quietly purling about the dam. Then he looked out to sea. How thick a bank of blackness crouched upon the horizon! and out of that blackness shone the bright light at Seal's Head. In the daytime, though, a fascinating stretch of water opened before one looking out to sea. When he was a boy, he used to gaze from this point upon the widening ocean.

He would laugh and whistle then, perhaps clap his hands in a signal to another boy gun-

ning on the marsh, or shout "Ship ahoy!" to a fishing-smack dashing out of harbor. Now he was in a sober mood. He did not whistle to-night. He did not even smile. The boy that used to gun on the marsh, long ago set his fowling-piece in the corner of an old attic, and his body slept to-night in the village cemetery. The fishing-smack, long since grown old, fell in pieces one day on a lee shore. As for himself, he felt as if he were on a lee shore, and he had a mood for dropping in pieces, dropping into those soothing, quieting waters beneath him and ending everything, fear and anxiety and hunger—how hungry he was! But oh, might he not end some other things? There were beautiful dreams, that would come in better moments, and did he want to drown those? He might be worse off in the water than out of it. No, he was not ready to jump in, to-night. Besides, he had ten cents in his pocket. He would jump into the water some other night—perhaps.

Ten cents—ha—ha!

He laughed, gripped the dime anew, and winking at the moon said, "You know that will get me a stout drink of beer, yes, and you shine on the place where I can get it. Only a few miles from here is a place where they

will sell it to me. I'll take a nap when I get out of this neighborhood and then push on—for ten cents' worth—ha—ha!"

Two miles away he found a bed in a haystack, piled up in a lonely field. He pulled the hay about him, making believe it was a warm, woolly blanket, and he slept till the sun, shining into his face, seemed to say, "Wake up!"

He left both bed and blanket, and tramped on. His sleep did not seem to refresh him as at other times. His rest had been interrupted by dreams. He was back at the dam, looking down into the water and saying, "Shall I jump in?" Then he had a strange dream. Something that had not come to him for years. He seemed to be looking at a picture taken of himself when he was young. He was thought to be a rather wilful youth with queer notions, and such a notion was to have his picture taken one day in this fashion, his hat on, the back of his head turned toward the operator!

When facing the operator, he had been told by the man, "You have some fine locks."

"Take 'em then, so you can see 'em all," he told the operator promptly, and turned round.

In his haystack dreams, he saw this picture.

"That boy asleep, settin' in that chair, his

head dropped on the arm, made me think of my pictur'," he told himself as he tramped on.

Somehow this resemblance made him very uneasy.

"Oh, the boy won't want the ten cents," he muttered. "Besides, I dunno as it is his'n. Ha—ha! Guess we'll call it mine. We'll turn it into beer anyway and afterwards discuss who owns the money."

He tramped on, and considered the money matter settled; but it would not stay settled. The earthquake would heave again.

"Oh, I can send him the dime any time! Jest borrer it now! That's the way people do, nice people too, sometimes in churches, sometimes in banks, sometimes in town offices, and in fust-class society. They jest borrer! Ha—ha—ha, that's the word, borrer! And I—I'll jest borrer! Where is the thing though?"

Here he fumbled in his pockets.

"Where is the thing?"

He turned half round, pulled his pocket inside out and muttering, "It is not stealin'—'tis borrerin'," looked for the coin.

"Oh, there it is! It got mixed up with that paper. I see now! What is on the paper?"

The road had taken him through a forest

and the light was poor. Leaving the forest, he held the paper up to the strengthening sunlight and read slowly, "'Make—the—most—of yourself.' Oh, a sermon! Well, I'm a subject for a sermon. That is what I'm goin' to do with this ten cent piece." Here he addressed it—"I'm goin' to help you make the most of yourself. You'll give a man strength —mebbe—comfort—" He paused. Then he murmured in a low voice, "And—help him make a thirst that will be like fire, burnin' up his home if he has got any—burnin' up his property—burnin' him up too—and leave so little of him that it might look as if the devil would be cheated of his due—ha—ha! That's it! I'm goin' to help you make the most of yourself. Yes, and there's the place where it will be done! that black house ahead, see it?"

The black house was one of a shabby cluster. This particular black unit had a specially mean kind of a look about it, and in a mean kind of a way, the tramp sneaked round to the back door, looking in cautiously.

"Come in, come in!" shouted a coarse, hoarse voice, and then a dirty, dark-haired man showed himself.

If a beer-vender, no signs of his calling sur-

rounded him. Neither bar nor bottle was to be seen. The law was against his mean business, and all selling was done on the sly. He had recognized his customer, and the customer as promptly recognized the seller.

"Ten cents' worth of beer!" the tramp ordered.

The beer-peddler, humming a rowdy tune, lifted a trap-door in the floor, and went down a short stairway into a dark pit. When he came back, he held up a big mug of beer.

"Thar," he told his customer, "'twill put the life into ye! Help ye walk too! How much furder ye got to go?"

The customer though did not seem to hear. He had pulled out his money and the paper also. The paper he was examining again. He had caught sight of something far below the words, "Make the most of yourself!"

It was a signature indistinctly traced. The signature consisted of two letters, "P. T." In a low tone, he called these letters over; "P. T.! P. T.!"

As he looked at these, he saw again a boy's dark locks bowed in sleep, and then, the tears glistening in his eyes, he muttered, "P. T. stands perhaps for Phil Tolman!"

"Come, come!" growled the man, just from

the dark pit. "Here's your beer? Now if it had been hot coffee, it would be stun cold by this time—you waitin' so long. Take it!"

The customer looked at the beer and then at the dime and then at the little motto with its faint signature, "P. T."

Shaking himself as if shaking off a dreadful load, standing erect, he said in a clear, decided tone, "I think I won't take it, for——"

"Why, you have the money there, man! Ain't it good? Lemme see!"

"Oh, it's good, but"—and he shook his head positively—"it is not mine!"

The vender from the pit now thundered, "Stole it, did ye? I don't want stolen money—git—git—out!"

"You haven't a job so that I could earn the beer?" the tramp in a pacific tone ventured to ask.

"Git—out! That's my answer—to thieves! I may be low enough to sell rum, but I am high enough to have nothin' to do with thieves! Git——"

The tramp was out before the beer-peddler could add a word to "git." He turned once more, though, and ventured to say again, "You haven't a job——"

"Git——"

"I'd work for ye!"

The two men stood face to face, though an interval of ten feet stretched between them. The man of beer was in his doorway. The tramp ten feet away, stood beyond the corner of the building, and anybody out in the road could have seen him, while the wrathful beer-peddler was hidden.

"I'd like to work," called out the tramp in clear, loud tones, "if you or anybody round here would give me a job."

"Look here, sir!" A sweet, youthful voice in the road was speaking. "Do you want a job?"

The tramp turned at once and walked toward a young lady occupying with her driver a wagon. In the rear of the wagon seat was a big trunk. She was fashionably, richly dressed. It was not her dress though, but her face that gave her a special attractiveness. Her large, black eyes talked as well as her voice, and sometimes were very eloquent.

"You want a job?" she called out again.

She did not see the disappointed beer-peddler, only this roughly dressed man coming towards her.

He touched his old hat and lifted it also. Then she saw a dark curl that fell down over

his forehead. He bowed gracefully as he raised his shabby hat.

"He has some manners," she reasoned. "I will trust him."

"Can I do anything for you?" he asked.

Though his clothing was so very poor, he spoke with the air of one who had found in himself some claim on the qualities of manhood. His attitude was one of self-respect and dignity. He was apparently and really not the man that had gone into the back door of the house built over a pit. He had conquered a temptation. He had the air of a victor.

The young woman was now speaking:

"I left the railroad station back here to go to the village they call the Harbor, and my driver, who is not familiar with the roads, thinks he may have gone out of the way, and I want to know just how to go. Boardman Blake's is the place where I am going—if I can get there."

"I see," he replied, and he touched his hat again as he spoke. "The roads do mix up a little and there is a chance to get one's ideas mixed up too. However, you come this way and I'll start you off right."

He ran ahead and taking a road that turned

to the right, beckoned energetically. Making another run to a road swinging round to the left, he halted at this second corner.

"There, marm! You go down this road and take your second turn to the right—your second, remember—and then you go straight on till you get there! You can't miss Boardman's house if you should try to, for you keep on till you come in sight of the sea, and then you strike some woods, and then you come to Boardman's green front door. There's quite a leetle space between it and the road. You can't miss that ere green door!"

"Thank you! Here, please!" She was beckoning to him. As he came up to the wagon, she handed him a quarter.

"Thanks!" He bowed to her gratefully and to his thanks added this: "That will keep me from temptation. Money helps a man do right."

"We must do right with or without money, but I'm glad if it is acceptable."

She gave him another quarter.

"Oh, thanks, thanks!" He made a profound bow, and the young woman's team rolled rapidly away.

"You paid that feller pritty well," her driver remarked.

"It wasn't pay—at least, one-half of it. The way he took his first quarter led me to think he was pretty needy, and what he said made me think too he had been tempted in some way. I believe there's quite a man there."

The driver made no outward comments, but he said to himself, "I hope she'll pay this feller as well, and how would it do to make her think I had been tempted!"

For some time, the tramp stood watching that receding team. It dwindled. The young woman, the driver, became dots on the edge of the team which was finally a moving mass of black shadow in the dusty, gray road. The land must have suddenly fallen away, for out of sight as if down into the earth everything went abruptly. Then the watcher turned.

"Now," he exclaimed, "I'll have an honest breakfast! Oh, thank God, thank God!"

It was not so much for the breakfast but his victory, he was manifesting this gratitude. It was a strange cry for him, and yet entirely sincere. Out of his heart had come something worthy, something noble. It surprised the person who cried. He did not think it was there. It was like gold out of a dross-heap. It was so much like that human nature within the human breast, having so many things in it that

are sad and ugly and hateful, and yet things hopeful, beautiful, and grand also that will come up some time if not now, somewhere if not here.

"I know where I can go, I think, and breakfast, and they don't know me neither. I won't though go near that beer-feller."

He found in a humble home a clean, healthy breakfast, and that companion of worthy travellers, a Good Conscience, sat down at the table with him.

He waited in the neighborhood until night. Where he thought people did not know him, he begged for a day's job. A farmer let him do a little work in an orchard and gave him his supper for it. After twilight, he started to walk to the mill at Sandy Creek. It was dark when he reached the dam, but he safely crossed it.

"No one at the mill, of course," he said. "I'll try the door."

It was securely locked.

"I'll try a winder. Used to get in one when I was a boy."

He found a window that could be raised and it served him as a door. He felt his way along the mill floor to the arm-chair, for he remembered where it stood.

"Yes, here it is," he murmured, feeling carefully with his hands. "Here's the paper and I'll put on it a stone—I brought with me —to keep it down—and there's the ten cents. Now I'll go."

He stole back to the window and halted there one moment. He listened to the sound of the water uneasily moving under the mill, dripping from the flume or rustling against the piers of wood bearing up the mill.

He looked away to the sea, across which glimmered the light at Seal's Head. Then he climbed out of the window, cautiously lowered it and stole away. In one of his pockets he carried a piece of paper, not very clean, as he had picked it up in the road. A man at the house where he had taken breakfast, had printed on it at his request these words, "Make the most of yourself."

"Now put P. T. under that."

"'P. T.'?" repeated the man. "All right! I will."

"Now under P. T., put S. T."

The man obeyed. He also added S. T. to the original document.

"Now I've got a copy," the tramp told himself, "a copy of that paper."

When Phil Tolman entered the mill the next

day, he found the missing slip of paper and the missing dime.

"Oh! oh!" he cried. "If there isn't that paper and my ten cents! Good!"

He took up the money and recalled his dream about his great-grandfather. He broke out:

"Wonder if *he* took it off and brought it back—ha—ha! And the paper—yes—that's all right too. There's the P. T. I put down. And—let me look—at the bottom is something that looks—like—S. T.; yes it's S. T. Is it though? Guess I imagined it. Guess it is something else."

The above is only one chapter in the life of a dime. The other chapters are lost.

CHAPTER XI.

AUNT LYDDY HAS COMPANY.

"OH, there is that boy! I want to tell him that Aunt Lyddy is goin' to have cump'ny. I must be quick."

It was Kitty who, running out of doors, her rich brown hair streaming down her shoulders, lifted her voice and called as she ran after him, "Phil! Phil!"

"That boy" was on his way to the mill.

He turned at the sound of Kitty's energetic voice. "What's wanted?"

"Hold on a minute, Phil!"

"Haven't got more'n a minute, for the tide has been in some time and I've got to start that mill."

"Here I come! Oh Phil, Aunt Lyddy is goin' to have cump'ny, and she wants me and you."

"Me and you? Who else?"

"The new teacher and oh, she's splendid—and Aunt Lyddy's nephew—that Walter Plympton. He's got through college and is

home on a visit and he's goin' to be a doctor, I guess—is one——"

"Wall, I can't help it if he is. I shall have to git him to doctor the mill if I don't git there soon. Good-by! Can't stop!"

He turned to run.

"Come home by five, for I want to fix you up."

"Wall—l—l!"

Kitty flew back to the house, thinking with profound interest upon these two subjects; first, what she would wear, and secondly, whether Phil had "any decent clothes to 'pear out in."

Yes, Aunt Lyddy was "goin' to have a cump'ny supper." It was intended to be complimentary to the new teacher who was going to be "a boarder" at the Blakes'. Walter Plympton was visiting his uncle and aunt.

That new teacher!

Her appearance was the result of a letter Boardman Blake had sent off after the visit of a sudden thought. He happened to be the "School Committee-man" for his district known as the Harbor, and he had difficulty in obtaining a teacher. He was thinking upon the subject when he reflected, "Now there's that Miss Eaton who visited Lyddy and me

when at the light-house. She's a fine gal, smart and spunky, who will make the boys toe the mark, and yet she's just the most agreeable, nicest young gal in the world."

The "sudden thought" was to write to her and invite her to teach the Harbor school!

He continued to reflect: "Now she may think it impertinent, for she don't need to teach. She is rich and I don't know what else. But I can't hear that she is doing anything in particular and I'm going to lay it on her—her—conscience—yes I will!"

This was a very bold step for Boardman, but Lyddy approved, and in this style he laid the subject on Miss Eaton's conscience:

"DEAR MISS EATON,

"You may think and will think me bold, but I must make a venture. We need a——"

Here Boardman blotted his sheet. Besides, a man wanted to see him, and he was obliged to begin again at a later hour. He was "a very 'ticklar man," as Aunt Lyddy put it, about his writing. He wrote a clear, bold, round hand, one of his o's being as round as Boardman's face. In his younger days he had sometimes taught "writin' school," and in one of his schools he met a pretty, black-eyed girl who

wrote the poorest hand in school. In his efforts to instruct her in penmanship, he became so much interested in the young penwoman, that he finally married her. "I never made sich poor progress," Aunt Lyddy had often said, "though I had one of the best teachers in the world."

The former writing-school master now began again his letter to Miss Eaton. He reached and continued that thought where he had left off:

"—We need a teacher in our district, and I am on the school committee and I said to myself, 'There's Miss Eaton!' Now you don't need to teach because you want the pay, I know very well, but I think others need you. They certainly ought to be improving and be making the most of themselves, but how can they unless somebody improves them, and helps them make more of themselves? You think it over, please, for here's an opportunity. Don't decide it to-day or to-morrow, but after three days' thinking, you write to me and—Oh, don't say no! Remember, there are some young people here who ought to make the most of themselves, but how can they unless somebody comes to bring them out? I am saying the same thing over again, and won't you do it? Do help them. My wife and I will take good care of you. She says 'Give her my love and tell her to come.' Resp. yours,

"B. BLAKE.

"P. S. Don't decide this to-day, but think it over carefully.

"P. S. No, two. Would it be too much if I ask you to make this a subject of prayer?"

"What a funny man!" exclaimed Miss Eaton when she read this. "That closing sentence, make the teaching of the Harbor school a subject of prayer! What do I care for the Harbor school to begin with? Ha—ha!"

Her big black eyes sparkled with laughter.

"That is a queer note!" she said more than once. "What an old-fashioned man he is! I wonder if he makes everything a subject of prayer—his potatoes, and whether he ought to have remained at the light-house! Funny old man! A subject of prayer!"

But Miss Eaton had a conscience and on it Boardman Blake had declared his purpose to lay this whole subject. Miss Eaton had a good deal of conscience. It moved everything in her life when the whole of her conscience was underway. It was like the big wheel under the mill starting up and stirring everything above it, setting the huge millstone to revolving, and with that carrying round everything else also.

Within twenty-four hours, she was reasoning

thus: "Why shouldn't I teach school and do something for my fellows more than I am doing? I have received a good education and really what am I doing with it? Lots of people are ignorant and am I sharing my knowledge with them? Is our end in life just to receive? Really!"

The subject "laid on her conscience" was getting down into it and stirring it. It was like the water in Sandy Creek working its way to and flowing through the sluice, pressing toward the stout turbine wheel, making stronger and stronger headway.

The second day, she was saying, "Really! What had I better do? I know that is one reason why we are in this world, to share with others. If I have a gift, am I going to wrap a napkin round it and stow it away? There is Walter Plympton!"

A flush came to her fair cheeks like a crimson tinge to an opening rose.

"He has got some of those ideas about helping others, but I don't know as he cares anything for me or cares to know whether I have them——"

Here she sighed and the crimson in the rose-petals took a deeper flush.

"Well, I must decide for myself, and what

shall I do? Singular how this subject takes hold of me! Going to that Harbor village to keep school—a thing I never did nor cared to do, and when I had planned to do so many different things this season. I did not think the subject would concern me when I opened that old man's note. And he wanted me to pray over the matter! I wish he had not said that! What did he want to stick it in for, anyway? Pray over it!"

But the second night after the arrival of the letter, she did pray. She cried, "Help me, Father, to decide this whole matter by the guidance of Thy Spirit!" The third day, she sent a letter to Boardman Blake, saying she would come.

The water had reached the turbine wheel, was pushing it round vigorously and now everything in the outer world was stirring in energetic harmony. The mill was "a-goin'."

Two days later, a young woman seated in a country wagon, a driver beside her, a big trunk behind her, was asking a man the road to the Harbor and to Boardman Blake's.

The very next day, "cump'ny" was expected at Aunt Lyddy's. Kitty and Phil were going to be there. It was a great event for Kitty and a still greater one for Phil. Kitty

had been "out to nice cump'ny" a few times, but it was Phil's *début* among people of the social standing of Boardman and Lyddy Blake. Kitty was very anxious that Phil should appear at this time as well as possible, but first of all, what was the state of his clothes.

"I have overhauled your clothes," she said, and then sighed.

Phil did not have at the present time "a best suit" entire. He had a fragment, a good jacket. As for his pants, she darned and brushed and cleaned them until she could say, "It is the best I can do." She held them up, turned them round, said again, "It is the best I can do," and then handed them to her brother.

"There, Phil, now you dress, and then I'll put the finishin' touches on ye."

Phil soon appeared before Kitty in evening dress.

"This suit ye?"

"Lemme see, Phil."

She eyed him critically.

"Your hair needs a little partin'."

In vain did she attempt to plow a furrow straight and well-defined through his bushy locks.

"Ow, Kitty, ow! You hurt. My hair is real kinky."

"I should think it was. That's the word for it, kinky! It is like gittin' a path through the beach-plum bushes. Now lemme see your shoes!"

She looked down to see if they had had their annual blacking.

"I forgot, Kitty—oh!"

She sighed.

"Well, it's no matter. We are all out of blackin'. But hold on!"

She went to a drawer and took out a collar and necktie.

"There, Phil, I am goin' to put you into these."

Phil's eyes flashed with pride. "Collar and necktie" made more of a harness than he had been accustomed to. He readily bowed his head that he might go into this conventional subjection. But the harness was too binding.

"Kitty!" he gasped. "You—you don't mean to choke me?"

"Not exactly, Phillie!" laughed Kittie.

It was a very pleasant, silvery laugh, and it fell from Kitty's lips like a spring brook falling over the smooth stones in its mountain channel. It gave Phil assurance.

"That's a good gal! Jest a little more chance to breathe."

"There. Can you git along? But you need not wear it. I—I'll——"

"Oh—I guess I'd better," said Phil. "Only give my boat all the painter you can."

Phil's close-tying painter was destined to play an important part in the history of that day.

When Kitty had dressed her companion, she gave him out of her own limited stock a few lessons on company etiquette.

"Don't put your hands in your pockets——"

"It's real handy, Kitty!" moaned Phil. He looked in bewilderment at the appendages that were extremely useful in milling, that as fans or paddles were very helpful in swimming, but on this occasion,—"cump'ny"—what could be done with them unless a boy stuck them in his pockets? Hands would always be in the way, Phil knew.

"Then your feet—don't put them out too fur!"

"Oh, dear!" groaned Phil. "I wish I was a girl and you'd got a long gown for me—goin' way down to the floor."

"No, boys don't want gowns."

She closed her drill by giving this bit of safe direction: "Then you watch the teacher——"

"What's her name?"

"Miss Eaton, and you do as she does."

This advice seemed natural enough, and it had no special significance as Kitty gave it, and yet like Phil's necktie, it was destined to have an important place in the proceedings of the day.

It was about five in the afternoon. Miss Eaton was not in the Blake home; Kitty and Phil though were on hand. Phil was sitting up straight and stiff as a post, in the parlor. In that close-fitting collar, in the stiff necktie, he felt very much like a thief in a pillory. Kitty could not assume a stiff attitude if she tried, but she felt under a disagreeable restraint. She could not forget that she was clerk, and would have hailed with joy the tinkle of the bell announcing that somebody was in the shop wishing to see her. Phil would have welcomed anything for a change, from a hurricane to a flood.

"Kitty!" he called in a low tone, the two being by themselves in the parlor. "Don't you think it poky?"

"R-r-rether!"

Ting-a-ling-ling-ling!

Kitty smiled, and clapping her hands, jumped up promptly.

"Customer, Phil!"

"Oh—have I got to stay here and be hung by this collar, Kitty? I—I want some air."

"You be a good boy, and I'll see if I can't find you a chance outside. If there's a rush of customers, I'll send for you, any way. But you know if Aunt Lyddy should come in and find us both gone, or Mr. Plympton, you know——"

Here this teacher of etiquette was interrupted by a sharper command of the bell.

"Oh, dear, Phil, you stay, and I'll git you out—but if—you know, Aunt Lyddy or Mr. Plympton *should* come!"

Ting-a-ling-ling!

Kitty flew out of the room.

"Aunt Lyddy or Mr. Plympton!" They were not thinking at all of the parlor. They were having an interesting conference out in the kitchen. Aunt Lyddy was putting into a big pan the dough for a batch of her famous biscuit. Her nephew stood beside her, silently watching the process. He was a well-shaped, handsomely built young man, with dark hair and beard, and bright, hazel eyes.

"When does Miss Eaton begin her school?" he inquired, breaking the silence.

"Now is my chance!" thought Aunt Lyddy.

She answered carelessly, "Oh, next Monday!"

Aunt Liddy had a way of going straight at a subject, and especially when it opened itself as easily before her as in this case. She sent her shot home to the mark and in this wise:

"Walter, I had an idee you were interested in that gal—in Miss Eaton."

Walter blushed and coughed and cleared his throat and stammeringly said, "Oh—ahem—I—I—think she is—a nice girl."

"I see! He don't deny what I charged him with," reflected Aunt Lyddy.

"Wall, then, I wouldn't be so bashful and backward about it," she advised aloud.

Walter now was both blushing and laughing, but he said not a word.

"You see now she has real principle, Walter. A rich gal—oh, she has any amount of money—she might take her pick of beaus all the country round, but she keeps 'em all off. Then think of it, how she comes down here to teach a leetle country school! You don't know about that. Boardman wrote her what I call a real 'peal to her conscience. He said he was goin' to lay it on her conscience. She, in her letter back, wrote real sensible, that she felt she must do for others, and she

has come for that alone. Now don't you think her a gal worth havin'? I call her a prize—isn't she?"

"Oh, yes!"

"Wall!"

Aunt Lyddy looked at him in silence.

This look meant, "What are you goin' to do about it?"

But Walter could not only be good at giving counsel to another but at keeping his own counsel. He would not open the door any wider to Aunt Lyddy.

He only laughed again and sauntered away.

"Wall," she reflected, "I've sot him to thinkin'. That's a great thing in this world. Now I must have Kitty's help."

She went to the door and called: "Kitty!"

"Comin', Aunt Lyddy!" echoed a voice from the shop.

"Oh, good!" thought Kitty, "now I can let poor Phil out of prison. He can tend here for me."

The liberated prisoner was happy to become shop-keeper, and promptly began to smile upon a row of small hesitating buyers before the candy-counter.

"Prices are on the things, Phil," called out Kitty, and left for the kitchen.

"Kitty, I want you to help me set the table. Things are in the chiney closet."

"I will get them. I like to set a table."

"I'm goin' to have my mother's chiney cake-basket in the centre, Kitty."

"I know where it is."

"It is a good idee, Kitty, to save some pieces of crockery and hand 'em down in the family. Your children will be glad to have them, or your relatives any way."

"My children? I shall never marry, Aunt Lyddy."

"Nonsense! I talked that way, until one night when I was tendin' a writin'-school that Boardman kept. He said he would give me a lesson in private and at that time he took hold of my hand to show me how to make a q——"

"Oh, how did it look, Aunt Lyddy, when it was made? Do tell me!"

"He said it was the crookedest q, the wust one any of his scholars ever made all the time of his keepin' writin'-school, but—less than a year from the time that crooked leetle q was made, we were married. We have been very happy with one another, though Boardman has more book-larnin' than me and he could teach me a hundred things."

"The man that I love could teach me ten hundred things," thought Kitty, "but he never"—she sighed—"he never will think of me, and I never shall marry."

"What you sighin' for, Kitty?"

"Oh, I was thinkin'."

"Now you stop that kind of thinkin' and fetch me the glass jelly-dish I said my great-aunt Susan left me. I told you about it, one day."

That rare old jelly-dish in which floated juicy plums on a sea of deep crimson syrup was the centre of a tempting display of light, flaky biscuit, cold turkey, sponge cake true to its name and temptingly golden. These were only the outlines of the feast, filled in with various minor details of cookery.

"Talk about Boardman Blake's teachin' Lyddy!" thought Kitty. "I guess she could teach him a lot of things. What would he do if he had to cook this supper? He'd be in despair."

All this Boardman understood. He thoroughly appreciated his wife's practical knowledge and domestic ability.

"We men would be helpless as babies without our Lyddys," was a frequent thought in Boardman's appreciative brain.

Aunt Lyddy's company had a very enjoyable time. Boardman and his spouse were thoughtful and on the watch for opportunities to make the hour agreeable to their guests. Walter was bright and chatty. Miss Eaton was easy and helped put others at ease. Phil felt that he was sitting in a strait-jacket, but he was less conscious of this than of Kitty's naturalness and tact and he directed a steady succession of admiring looks towards her sparkling face. Supper at last was over, and so was a brief season of after-supper talk. The "school-marm" begged to be excused and stepped out into the old-fashioned garden behind the house.

"Kitty told me," thought Phil, "to watch the teacher and do as she did. Now is my chance. My collar is chokin' me! I feel as if somebody was hangin' me! I want to loosen the thing. Yes, guess I'll go out and foller the teacher. Now is my chance. I'll git excused."

Phil stole out after the teacher.

Somebody else thought her time had arrived.

"Now is my opportunity," reflected Aunt Lyddy. "I'll send out Walter to start that boy in, and I hope Walter will have sense enough to remain outside with my cump'ny."

Would Walter go out for Aunt Lyddy, and ask Phil to come to her?

"You need not hurry in, Walter," whispered Aunt Lyddy.

Phil came in promptly and was asked to "tend shop."

"Will you take my collar off, Aunt Lyddy?" he whispered. "It's real choky."

"Poor boy! You want me to let you out of jail?" asked Aunt Lyddy, sympathetically, her eyes twinkling. "There! Now you can be nat'ral."

Walter Plympton did not return to his Aunt Lyddy very speedily. By an inevitable, unexplainable law, he and the "school-marm" wandered away from human residences into the woods where they could be alone.

Walter Plympton had been warmly interested in Miss Eaton, but chilling to his hopes was the consideration of the vast difference between their situations in life. He as a poor physician was starting out in a large town where he must do much humble and even missionary work before he could be established in a practice at all lucrative. Miss Eaton was a young lady with a fortune. Could she, would she, come down to the humble grade of his work? Had she shown any such interest in

humanity at large that she would be likely to anticipate with interest his particular work, share its disappointments and cheerfully carry its burdens? Her action in the matter of teaching the Harbor school had been purposely detailed to him by Aunt Lyddy. The young physician saw the young teacher in a new light and it was like that of sunlight skilfully directed by Aunt Lyddy's hand and falling on an object imperfectly seen and understood. Aunt Lyddy in turn did not realize what a burning sun-ray she had let fall on Walter's feelings and into what a flame his interest in Miss Eaton had been kindled. He was glad to see her alone after tea. As the hush of the woods deepened about them, as the teacher was asked concerning her school and her school plans, about her possible work for the future, she was also asked by her companion if she could not include him in those efforts she was making for the welfare of others, only promising to extend them through life?

When after tea Walter Plympton left the old Blake home, he was hazily aware that two or three birds were somewhere singing an evening hymn. When he came back, he was definitely conscious and thoroughly persuaded

that earth and sky were musical with the voices of a multitude of canaries, bobolinks, larks and angels. He and the "school-marm" though were the only ones that heard them.

CHAPTER XII.

ANOTHER SCHOLAR.

IT was Monday morning, and it was like an anniversary morning with Kitty Tolman. When the door of the week's active life opened, she did not allow herself to forget that it was on its threshold, one certain week, on a Monday, that she met that stranger whose sudden appearance, had made an epoch in her earthly history. She thought of that interview with him in her boat and of the words that while not officious in the least, had the force of instructions. When she came back to her poor, mean chamber, how dissatisfied she was with it and with herself!

The morning of this chapter, she was again in her room. How humble seemed her chest of drawers, how low the roof, how rough the walls! As for the piece of looking-glass stuck up against the bare bricks of the old chimney, she was tempted to snatch it away and throw it out of the window. Wisely, she let it alone.

Monday morning, she generally washed the clothes of the family and consequently could not be shop-keeper. Like some other washing-days, this one brought with it a dislocation of the domestic machinery. Things did not go on smoothly. Phil was very good-natured as a rule, but this morning something had upset his equanimity and he had gone off to the mill in a tumult. Kitty was aware that she had not helped Phil keep good-natured, and she was vexed with herself for her shortcomings. The boy is a hero and the girl a heroine who every washing-day will carry out the purpose to stay sweet-natured.

After breakfast, Kitty was standing at her wash-tub, splashing the clothes in the foaming suds, when she saw her grandfather pass the window on his way to the beach to pick up a little possible work among the fishermen.

"Poor man!" she thought. "There he goes a-hobblin' off. I spose he thinks he must make the most of his opportunities, but what a slim chance he has!"

Then through the window, she saw a flock of children tripping off to Miss Eaton's school.

Kitty ceased to churn the white suds and looking still at the children, thought, "Now them children are goin' to make the most of

their chance. Oh, dear! How much I need schoolin' somewhere! I know I'm ign'ant. Bein' with Walter Plympton and Miss Eaton made me feel real cheap. I know I don't spell right nor talk good grammar and still I want to—Oh, dear! If they should take one of them gulls I can see flyin' over the water and clip its wings and shet it in a box—that's the way I feel! All boxed up!"

Here the gull at the wash-tub inhaled a deep, full breath, as if to gain relief somehow. Relief though came when she told herself, "You must go to school!"

The prison-box was—broken? Cracking, but yet not broken. Objections began to press in upon her.

"What, Kitty Tolman go to school! Why, you are bigger than any girl there, and might have to go into a class of scholars a good deal smaller."

She drew back from her proposed course. The box was closing in upon her again, and yet in her own thinking she began to ask questions: "Was it half as unsatisfactory to go into a class of those so much younger and smaller, as all through life to be behindhand and backward because she had not studied when young?"

"I'll—go!" said Kitty, resolutely. "I'll—go—to school."

She thought of the young man in her boat; she saw his searching eyes; she knew he would be pleased.

"If I have to take a low place, I need not stay in it," she reflected.

She must take a low place at first though. Humility is the price of exaltation. We never go up to the level of any lofty achievement, but we must first go down to some consciousness of our poverty of resources and there work hard, and from it, work up. The scholar admired and honored to-day, for years has been grubbing down in the place whose attendant is hard work, possibly menial labor, for the sake of the bread and butter the scholar must have that he may live.

Something happened that day which encouraged Kitty to carry out her school-purpose. A letter came from her father, Stephen Tolman. Since his face at the kitchen-window had appeared so strangely to Kitty, nothing had been seen of him by any one of the family. He had presented himself after a fashion to Phil at the mill, but Phil was asleep. When he carried out of town on a slip of paper that advice, "Make the most of

yourself," he was resolved to try once more to redeem his manhood, and in that redeemed manhood, go home.

He wrote his father, "I did not succeed when I tried, and now I am going to sea, hoping to get away from temptation. I do want to be something and I shall be home yet."

He enclosed money for his father and children, asked his father to pray for him, and signed himself, "One who wants to be something, your unworthy son, Steve."

"I too will be something," resolved Kitty, all the more determined to go to school.

The school-teacher in the Harbor district was looking, the next day, upon her pupils chatting around their desks, and waiting for the opening of the session.

"School has been keeping a week. Every seat is taken but one," she murmured. "Just one left! Who will get that?"

She was so popular an instructor that new scholars had been flocking every day to the school-house. In several cases, two scholars were occupying one seat. The last chance to sit down, she had kept for an "emergency."

She had hardly asked that question about the seat, "Who will get that," when she heard a knock at the door.

"Another scholar?" she inquired.

Yes, a fat boy, and into that vacant seat he slipped.

"Glad I kept that one seat open," reflected the teacher. "Full now!"

In the meantime, Kitty was hurrying toward the school-house. She had made an arrangement with Aunt Lyddy so that she could be absent from the little shop half of each day. She knew the seats at school were rapidly going, but one was not taken, she had learned the night before, and she thought she might be the one to occupy it. She knew too that she must not be tardy, and she was hurrying all the faster, her cheeks crimson, her breath coming in puffs, anxious to be saved from the mortification of a late appearance.

"Oh, if I should be 'tardy'—that's what the teacher calls it, they say—and have to go in 'fore all the scholars there—the—biggest girl—scholar there—the—biggest girl—yet!" thought Kitty, puffing still harder.

She could now see the school-house.

This encouraged her.

There too was the open door!

That looked hospitable.

Between her though and that open door, she saw a fat boy!

"Dear me, he's got books under his arm as if he was a new scholar. And it's Tony Watkins! What if he should git that last seat! What he wants to go to school for, when his mother says he is feeble, I don't see! Feeble and fat, the idea! What assurance! as Aunt Lyddy says. Couldn't I git ahead of him? Isn't there a winder I could go through and head him off! P'raps he isn't a new scholar, and jest took his books home last night! Lemme see!" She thought a moment. "My! Phil said last night that Tony was a-goin' to begin to-day! I forgot that, didn't I?"

A shadow fell upon her when she recalled Phil's words.

Another shadow fell when she saw Tony walk into the open door!

And then, as she reached the school-house, her heart still faster tripped away as she heard the teacher in a clear voice say, "The school may come to order!" At the same time the door was closed! She had heard about the habits of the school and knew it would not open till after prayers.

"Tardy!" groaned Kitty, the shadows falling deeper. "I have a great mind to go back and try it to-morrow."

But she knew that any day she must pay perhaps a heavy price for anything she gained, and it might be heavier to-morrow than to-day. She waited until the door opened and then stepped forward resolutely. Oh, it seemed as if the place were crowded with eyes, every one staring at Kitty Tolman!

"What, another scholar!" was the teacher's first thought. "What shall I do with her? And a bigger girl than any in the whole school!"

She looked again at the big girl wearing a rather shabby red shawl, blushing and looking awkwardly to right and left.

"But she has a fine face," Miss Eaton continued to reflect. "Why, it is the girl I have seen at Mrs. Blake's. It is Kitty Tolman! But dear me! What shall I do with her? Haven't a seat left! But perhaps she hasn't come as a scholar, only on an errand."

Advancing promptly toward Kitty, Miss Eaton said cordially, "Take my seat—my chair! Have you brought me a message from Mrs. Blake?"

"Oh, no!" said Kitty, pulling aside her shawl and showing a few old school-books with worn covers. "I—I have come—to—to—go to school."

Her crimsoned face was now of a brighter fire.

"Oh—well—I am glad to see you. Take my chair, Kitty!"

Kitty shook her head.

She must go down before she went up. The alternative of the teacher's chair was a bench in front of all the seats, and used for classes when reciting.

"I'll sit down here," said Kitty, decidedly, and down she dropped on the recitation-bench.

To be tardy, not to have a seat, were these some of the rounds in learning's ladder she was trying to mount? She knew she was blushing deeply and the perspiration ran freely down her cheeks. She dared not look up. Miss Eaton was obliged to call out some small disciples in the "Primary Speller" department. Kitty knew how big she looked beside these tots, but she did not budge. She was willing to begin at the lowest round of the ladder, though it might start in the cellar, and this was the place where she and Miss Eaton went, at recess.

"I have a mind to look down cellar, Kitty, if you will go with me, for—" Miss Eaton was interrupted by an eager boy-voice speaking at her side. It was Tony Watkins.

"Teacher, teacher, she can have my seat!"

"And what will you do, Tony?"

"Oh—I could set round."

"Perhaps she could hold you in her lap," whispered one of the big girls standing near.

"I—I should like that," said Tony, gallantly.

"No, Tony, you're ever so good, but you keep your seat," said Kitty, rewarding the generous Tony with one of her most cordial smiles.

"Now, Kitty," said Miss Eaton, "I was going to say that one of the scholars told me just now that a desk was down cellar. Come, please!"

Down into the dusky, damp cellar they went, and Kitty's sharp eyes detected something in one corner.

"Oh, I see it, Miss Eaton! There it is!"

"A desk? Yes, but oh, so dirty, Kitty."

"I can clean it. I'm used to scrubbin'."

"Well now, we will have it up stairs—it is big enough, you see. Stop! the boys shall lug it."

It went up into the schoolroom promptly, was dusted, wiped, scrubbed by Kitty's energetic hands, and the next day she occupied it.

"Oh, there," she sighed when going home,

"I've got something to set in, but how shall I git anything to study out of."

As a sign of an outfit, she had taken to school a few old relics Gran'sir Tolman had used when he was a boy, a manual on geography, an orator, a coverless arithmetic. She was now lugging them home. In her hand, she carried a list of books which Miss Eaton had written down in a formidable column;

"Writing-book, Payson and Dunton's, also pen and ink.
Grammar, Smith's.
Speller, Webster's.
Arithmetic, Greenleaf's.
Geography, Mitchell's.
Slate and pencil."

Kitty read through the list and gave six groans, one for a book.

How glad she was to see Phil running out of the house to meet her!

"Oh, how did you git along, Kitty?"

"Horrid, horrid——"

"Oh nonsense!"

"But jest see here! All them books! I haven't any money, Phil."

Phil thought a while. Then his face began to "brighten."

Pathetic is the interest of poor people in one another's wants, while their generosity is large and cordial.

"My writin' book and pen and ink and my slate and pencil, you can have, Kitty. So much on hand! Cheer up!"

"But the books, Phil!"

"I know how you can buy two of 'em."

"How?"

"Do you remember Mr. Keatin's money upon the shelf, and Bill Hawkins changed it into another half but it is worth as much? There's one book. Aunt Lyddy said the storekeeper who keeps 'em would let us have books —you and me—at cost, cos we were her friends. Then Mr. Keatin' gave me money to buy a book and I'll buy a grammar and let you use it."

"You are a jewel, Phil. I can scare up twenty-five cents toward another——"

"And me, twenty-five more—hoo—ror!"

But a "Speller"! Kitty waited for that a week, and then Phil sold some old iron and bought the speller.

Kitty enjoyed the sight of all the books when purchased, but the most interesting were a "'rithmetic" and "grammar," purchased with the money that came from the invalid young

man. Did he ever imagine the use to which his money would be set apart?

Kitty went diligently to work.

Her need of improvement greatly sobered her.

"Why, teacher," said one girl to Miss Eaton, "you wouldn't think 'twas the same gal, for she was up to things all the time and kept her teacher busy a-lookin arter her."

"Kitty used to be a lively piece, I tell ye," declared another scholar. "She would play and whisper and have to stand in the floor and was nothin' but a romp. Now she's still as a mouse and does nothin' but study all the time."

"This is a very interesting case," thought the teacher, watching Kitty's shapely head bent studiously above her books. "I would like to get to the bottom of it. Wonder if she will tell me!"

Kitty, though, in spite of her great frankness at times, could be as reticent as a mole in his underground home. For a long time, Miss Eaton learned nothing significant about this open, yet secretive scholar.

There came to the Harbor finally a strong wind from the sea. With it marched long, dark, hostile-looking columns of cloud. They began to discharge thick lines of rain like

arrows sent by old-time bowmen up in the sky and now coming to attack the Harbor.

"A dismal afternoon!" declared the teacher, looking out of a window. "I will dismiss early as possible."

The scholars save Kitty hurried away when dismissed. Kitty lingered to walk home with the teacher.

"I have a little work, Kitty, and had you better wait?"

"Oh, I want to. You'll want some one to go with you. Hark! Hear the windows rattle!"

"We will have some more fire, Kitty."

The day was very chilly. The schoolroom was heated by a box-stove, and the teacher crammed more wood into it. She soon finished her intended work, and then the two young women sat in front of the stove, busily talking. As the shadows thickened, the light of the fire shone brighter through the draft-openings in the rusty stove-door. Now and then the teacher glanced with keen interest at the young face by her side, and tried by the light of the fire-flashes to read Kitty's thoughts.

"Do you like to come to school, Kitty?" she asked.

The scholar hesitated.

"You—you know I'm a pretty big scholar and I am backward by the side of a lot of the scholars, and it is not altogether pleasant on that account, but I like to be with you——"

"Thank you! You know you have my name?"

"Yours?"

"Yes. Mine is Katharine, and my friends call me 'Kate'."

"Now that's nice! Oh, I like that! Well, I'm only Kitty—oh, I was tellin' you about comin' to school. I like to think what can be done when one really tries to make the most of one's self."

"Kitty, I have heard you say something like that before, and I think it was also in a letter that Mr. Blake sent to me. I wonder how the phrase could have come into such use and who started it."

It seemed to Kitty as if she suddenly had become the box-stove—and what a heat was in her cheeks! As the fire through the openings in the damper flashed its light across Kitty's face, she felt that the teacher's dark, penetrating eyes were searching and reading all her thoughts. Kitty spoke with hesitation.

"Oh—oh—I can't tell how many have used it, and I know I—I—I—got it from a—f—f—

friend. Yes, I think I may call him a friend."

There was silence and then Kitty spoke again. Speech was a necessity. Otherwise, it seemed to her as if the furnace within would consume her in its fierceness.

"Don't you think it queer, Miss Eaton, how one person can move another?"

"I certainly do."

"You may never see them but once, you know. They go across your path like the ships that meet and speak at sea and never see each other again, and yet—yet—they set one to thinkin'."

"I know it, Kitty, and you met a person of this kind?"

"Yes, I did, teacher, and sometimes, I wish I hadn't. I know I am tryin' to do better and study and behave, and yet I—I am not satisfied. I am sometimes so unhappy I think it would have been better if I was what I used to be. I wasn't tryin' to make much of myself any way, but I was happy or sort of happy."

Kitty dropped her head and spoke in melancholy tones. The teacher saw something on Kitty's hot, flushed cheek, that flashed bright like a crystal, and then it rolled away.

"My poor, poor Kitty!" exclaimed the

teacher warmly, throwing her arms about Kitty. "You must let me help you and comfort you——"

"You're — like — a mother — thank you," gasped Kitty.

Another moment the flood-gates were open and Kitty was crying. Only a moment, for something within Kitty, her own strong, proud self came to her aid, and quickly raising her head which had fallen on Miss Eaton's shoulder, she dashed away the tears, tried to laugh, and cried, "There! I'm foolish——"

"Oh, no, Kitty! Let me be your friend!"

"I—will—and now let me go home with you."

Miss Eaton wanted to know more of this impulsive creature, both child and woman, who a moment ago had been sobbing on her shoulder, but was now on her feet trying to laugh. Kitty already was springing after her shawl, and calling out, "Now we will go."

They walked the same path as far as possible, and when they separated, the teacher kissed Kitty and said, "You must let me be a mother—or a big sister to you."

Kitty's frame shook with emotion and the tears trickled down her cheeks, but she was a woman and lifting her beautiful eyes dashed

with tears, said resolutely, "I'll try to be a good sister if you'll have me," and when she kissed the teacher, her face was illumined with a smile like one of those bursts of light breaking out of the sunset sky after a rainy day.

"It is a strange case," mused the teacher. "I wonder who it was she met. I thought one moment she would tell me all. She is not just a common girl. She is fast improving in her studies, her spelling, her grammar—in everything going ahead, and showing it in her talk. Yes, going ahead and yet something—something—is troubling her." The teacher turned and looked after Kitty. "What a beautiful walker she is!" she exclaimed.

Quickly, this young Juno was lost in the meshes of the thick fog falling over her like a net, and slowly Miss Eaton walked toward Boardman Blake's. More than once she asked herself how she would have felt, had she and Walter Plympton been only as the ships, that meeting in mid-ocean, signal to one another and never meet again.

"Poor Kitty!" the teacher murmured. "It is woman's way."

CHAPTER XIII.

THE RAINY DAY AT THE MILL.

THE foggy rain grew into a long blast of northeast weather. The waves rolled up out of the ocean in fury and then were shattered in helplessness on the rocks. The tides ran very high.

Walter Plympton came to town the second day of this spell of weather. He wanted to see how the "school-marm" liked some of his professional plans soon to be inaugurated, and he thought he might suggest something for his two "patients," Boardman Blake and wife, one having a cold and the other the "norology."

"He gives more time to the well folks than to the sick ones," said Aunt Lyddy, "but it's all right."

He promised Phil Tolman to call upon him at the mill, and the second stormy day, Walter started under Boardman Blake's big family umbrella to keep his word to Phil.

"Ah," he said, as he followed the cart-

path to the mill, "the tide threatens to sweep across this way. It will be some time before it will fall low enough to allow Phil to run his mill."

Phil at the mill was waiting for the turning of the tide. In the meantime, he was doing odd pieces of work, measuring corn, bagging meal, clearing out corners where dirt had accumulated.

The door was open, and as Phil worked, he happened to glance out, and saw Walter Plympton under Boardman Blake's umbrella.

"I like that man," thought Phil. "He knows a lot. He's a-goin' to make me a call. He keeps his word and I like a man who keeps his word to us boys."

Phil, broom in hand, met his caller at the door.

"I'm glad to see you, Mr. Plympton."

"I'm glad to see you, Phil. You know I promised to call on you."

"I know you did."

Phil looked his delight at the man who had not forgotten a promise to a boy.

"Then this is where you work, Phil?"

"Yes, sir. Haven't you ever been here before?"

"Once, when on a visit to my uncle. Do

they keep you at work all the time—I mean every tide?"

"Jest about, though I only work part of the time, nights."

"Do you have plenty of reading when you are not obliged to give all your time to your work?"

"N—n—nothin' to speak of."

"You must be lonely. 'Twouldn't be a bad idea to do for millers what they do for sailors and light-keepers and life-saving crews, and that is to have for you all a library of books."

"I—I'd like that."

"Then if you have an odd moment, you have a good companion, for a good book is all that. There is no discount to such leisure."

"No what, sir?"

"Discount—I mean there is nothing lost."

Walter now walked about the mill.

"Ah, what is this?" he asked.

He had stopped before a sheet of brown paper tacked to the wall. These words had been chalked upon it;

"MAKE THE MOST OF YORESELF."

"That is a good motto, Phil." To himself he added, "A good motto, but poor spelling.

Shall I tell him? It is a pretty difficult thing to correct anybody and yet not hurt their feelings."

Phil was speaking. "Oh, I jest chalked it down there."

"'Make the most of yourself!' It starts one up. It is like the touch of a whip to a horse——"

"I—don't like whips for anybody. That takes holt of me like music, sir."

Walter was pleased.

"Phil, you are right, make the most of yourself. It starts one, as—a—drum does a soldier."

Walter turned about and began to inspect the hopper and the "runner."

"I wish I could run a mill," he told Phil. Then he gave some very interesting facts about the mills he had seen in the West one summer, and he had something to say about a miller's profits.

Finally, he declared again, "I wish I could run a mill. I am very ignorant, Phil."

"I—I—can tell you," said Phil, with delight, and proceeded to lift the veil from every mystery. Having sat at the feet of Phil and been instructed, Walter went away.

Phil was in a very self-complacent mood.

The mood continued until several things in the running of the mill turned out unsatisfactorily. To repair a mistake, he was forced to work out in the rain, and this damaged seriously his self-complacency. The plumage of his pride was ruffled and drenched. After all, he was only a young miller in wet, shabby clothes. Phil's fine feathers were destined to receive an uglier wetting. He began to recall the details of the young doctor's visit.

"What did he mean by 'discount'? 'Loss,' did he say, and I wonder where they use that? 'Discount,' 'discount'! Then he spoke about goin' West and about the des'mal system and an old phil—phil—sopher—what's that? Oh, I don't know much."

It was a spring shower that had struck the peacock's tail.

"But what is this?" he asked, looking down at his old arm chair, that was stationed under the sheet of brown paper carrying the challenge, "MAKE THE MOST OF YORESELF," In the chair he saw a slip of white paper. On this were penciled the very same letters? The same until the last word was reached. This was spelled 'YORESELF'?

"No," said Phil, "but 'YOURSELF.' There! I saw him leave something here, and he noticed

my spellin' and thought he'd put it right. Now that's it, I bet! He didn't want to tell me right out and mortify me and yet he wanted this young miller to know!"

Phil's guess was correct.

Badly wet was the peacock's tail now. Sorrowfully he changed the spelling on the brown paper sheet. "I—I—don't believe I know much," he went home saying, again and again, very dolefully.

Finally he thought he would seek a conference with gran'sir upon these subjects, first the fact of knowing little, then the way of knowing more. Gran'sir had a caller. As Phil neared the house, through the open door he heard two voices busily talking.

"You see, marm, I think Kitty is a good lively gal and Phil's a good likely boy——"

The peacock's tail at the door began to rise again.

"But," added gran'sir, "but I do wish they knew more, and if I do say it, mostly, Phil."

This was the worst drenching the fine plumage had yet received.

"That is my honest opinion, Miss Eaton."

"Kitty is doing very well, sir, and I am not only pleased because she learns so much, but wants and aims and tries to learn more. That

makes everything hopeful, for one is quite likely, if feeling that way, to be studying and learning in the future."

"Ter-zackly! I'm obliged to ye for sayin' that about Kitty. I wish I could do suthin' han'some for her in this matter, but—I—I—I'm a poor backbone to lean upon. What I'd like to see in society, but don't 'spect to, is the day when one child's opportunity will be good as another's. Of course, if they all have the same opportunity, they won't improve it alike and some will surely go ahead of others. Still, I say let 'em all start with an equal chance. But I was a-goin' to say I'm very thankful to you for the int'rest you take in our young folks. Ha-ha! I told my friend, Tinkum True, that I'd like to come to school myself and Tinkum said he'd like to come too. Jes' think! Tobias Tolman and Tinkum True a-comin' to school some day to be scholars! Guess thar ain't a seat that we could git our legs under, but we'd like to come jest the same."

Her words of reply were lost to Phil, but he could hear steps advancing toward the door, and he dodged behind a heap of driftwood and there hid away. The teacher started for the Blakes'.

Very soon, Miss Eaton heard a low, timid voice behind her: "Teacher!"

She turned and there was Phil Tolman. She smiled; he was emboldened to speak.

"You are not my teacher, but I'd like to have you."

"Thank you! I'd like to be your teacher."

He went on to tell her how he longed for instruction, but did not know how to secure it.

"Have you been thinking this way very long?"

"I can't say I have. I—I—jest had a caller and he sot me to thinkin'."

"Who was it, let me ask?"

"Walter Plympton."

The teacher coughed. Her interest in Phil was greatly quickened.

"Then you want to study?"

"I—I—do."

"But why don't you?"

"Oh—I run the mill, you see."

"But couldn't you study a little there, or would you be too disturbed?"

"I dunno. I might try."

"Then you might find a little time at home. Let me ask you a few questions. How far have you cyphered? As far as decimal fractions?"

"Des'mal fractions? Guess I never did. I don't remember 'em."

"Can you do questions in interest, discount, proportion?"

Phil was in a fog more bewildering than ever. He replied mournfully:

"No—er—marm!"

"It is pretty evident that you ought to know more, Phil. I don't want to discourage you, but there is much to be learned, and I am glad you appreciate your need. Knowledge is real power. It is like the water that runs the mill. I was down there one day to see it, and I looked into the flume through which the water runs that it may reach and turn the wheel. Knowledge is like that stream of water furnishing power. Education is a force that will set many wheels to turning. Only if you want to have this power, you must first store it up. The mill must have a 'Sandy Creek' where the water is stored up, and so you must have knowledge stored up in your memory and at your tongue's end, ready to flow out at any moment. Yes, a mill demands a mill-pond, and a good-sized one."

"Yes'm," said Phil, mournfully, appalled at the idea that there must be a Tolman knowledge-pond; and that he must make and fill it.

He looked enviously in the direction of Sandy Creek.

"You can not of course get everything at once, any more than Sandy Creek can fill up in a moment, but little by little you can do much. The more I look round me, the more I see, Phil, that work, that sticking to a thing, makes the great difference between people."

"Yes'm! I can work."

"Then let me make this proposition. If you can and will study at the mill or out of it —you can do something at home also—I will hear you out of school-hours some time."

"Oh, goodie!"

Phil's hat went promptly into the air and his face wonderfully "brightened."

After that interview, whenever the grinding and other work at the mill did not prevent, he could often be seen bending over a book, a bag of corn serving as a desk. He would also take his books home and study there.

"I am fillin' the Tolman knowledge-pond," he would often tell himself, "and I must put in one drop a day any way."

He was carrying home his books one day, when he heard footsteps near him, and also the rattle of wagon-wheels over in the road leading to the cart-path in which he walked.

It was a vain mood, but not strange when he said to himself, "Whoever is behind me will see that I'm studyin.' P'raps the man in the wagon will see me. I wish it was Walter Plympton behind me! I know he'd like to see those books."

Suddenly a voice in the rear of Phil and very unlike Walter's agreeable, resonant tones growled bear-like, "What ye up to? Those books paid for? You Tolmans are not keepin' your place. A pretty mess you'll make of it. You are no more fit for it than a crow-biddy. Let me have the books!"

Before Phil could realize what Bill Hawkins was doing and still less prevent it, Bill had roughly seized the books and pitched them into Sandy Creek!

Tears of anger and regret flooded Phil's eyes.

"Thief! I'll have 'em out agin!" he shouted.

He was about to jump into the water when that sound of wagon-wheels was heard coming nearer. What a jostling and rattling, what a jumping and jolting! A voice, afterwards described by Phil to Kitty as "an awful voice," was shouting loud and hoarse, "Stop—you—you Hawk's Bill!"

Phil looked up, and there was Boardman

Blake standing erect in his old yellow wagon, flourishing his whip, making all sorts of gestures as he urged on old Billy, the horse. He looked like a dragon flapping his wings, a dragon that had mounted the old farm-wagon and was coming on to an immediate assault.

Phil afterwards told Kitty all about it:

"Oh, Kitty, I never saw Boardman Blake lookin' so stirred up afore. He was red as a rasbr'y in the face. But when he got out, he was calm as Sandy Creek at sunset. I don't know but he was more awful when he was so calm. He went up to Bill this way—" here he laid a hand on Kitty's shoulder—"very quiet you know, and his voice very quiet and stiddy. You'd thought he was a-goin' to read a chapter out of the Bible. 'William' he says, 'you know I'm a man who wants to keep the peace, and I'm a man, too, who wants to keep his word, and I will, young man!' Oh, he was so quiet, Kitty, you knew suthin' was goin' to happen.

"'Now, William!' he says, jest as quiet as a lamb, 'you must git out the books, and do it voluntarily, and if you don't,—I'm a justice of the peace—you forgot that, young man! I will get out a warrant; I will give it to Tinkham True as constable; you will be arrested for

destroyin' property. Voluntary—remember—young man '—and, Kitty, he kept on jest as calm and quiet—' two minutes by the watch I will give you, and if you don't step into the water and fish out those books, I'll go home and make out the warrant, Phil doin' the complainin' and Tinkham the rest. Now I mean it, two minutes!' "

Here Phil took up a saucer to represent Boardman's silver timepiece, which was a kind of small town-clock. Then Phil laid his hand on Kitty as if she were the rascal.

" 'William,' said Phil, eyeing Kitty and speaking in calm but significant tones, 'your time is now almost up,—jest fifteen seconds'—and Kitty you ought to have seen Bill Hawkins scrabble into the water and fetch out the books!"

"Good!" cried Kitty. "What did Bill do?"

"Oh, he spit out his mad and looked as if he wanted to bite me when he says 'Thar! Take the books! Now you've got your own.'

" 'No, no!' says Uncle Boardman, jest as easy and like a gentleman, 'you make every book good as it was afore. Then Philip will have his own.'"

"You think Bill will do it?" asked Kitty.

"I think so, Kitty. Says Uncle Boardman,

'Your father, William, is a just man. It will be done.' "

And it was done. Phil soon owned several new books.

Boardman Blake gave an account of the matter to his wife. In Lyddy's eyes, the justice of the peace, of ordinary height, round and thick-set, rose up into the lofty stature of a giant as he proudly said, "I am justice of the peace, Lyddy, and I intend to come up to the level of my responsibility and see to it that every person, no matter if the humblest and the poorest, black or white, male or female, shall have justice done them. That is what we are in this world for, Lyddy, to see that everybody has fair play shown them."

He said this to Aunt Lyddy as he stood, one chilly morning, in the kitchen, and held out his broad palms to the fire and warmed up as much of Boardman Blake as he possibly could.

And Aunt Lyddy, who believed that Boardman was "a great orator in disguise" and, like Patrick Henry, only needed an occasion to bring him out, said as she admiringly contemplated her spouse, "That's whar you're right, Boardman."

CHAPTER XIV.

CHANCE WORDS THAT LAST DAY.

WINTER came and froze up everything except the great ocean. Even Sandy Creek was put under a white padlock. Spring winds blew, dissolved Sandy Creek's white padlock, melted away the snow in the fields and brought birds and blossoms.

Through that winter and spring also, Miss Eaton continued school-mistress in the Harbor district. Her labors were now coming to a close. Kitty had continued as her scholar through every term Miss Eaton had taught. She had made manifest improvement. This was shown in grammar whenever she spoke; in spelling and penmanship whenever she wrote, and Aunt Lyddy's shop-accounts testified to Kitty's success in arithmetic. Phil had made less improvement, for his opportunities had not been as extensive as Kitty's. He knew though the meaning of "discount" and could work out problems in "decimals, interest and

proportion." He had gained something and was anxious to gain more.

Kitty and Phil were very sincere mourners when the last day of Miss Eaton's labors arrived. For the evening, miscellaneous exercises, such as singing, reading and declamations were appointed.

Miss Eaton also said to her school, "My brother may be here. He has almost completed his studies for the ministry, and I shall ask him to say something on the subject of personal success."

"Outsiders," as the Harbor-villagers called those from the great world without, were often enough seen at the Harbor, but a "speaking" outsider, one quick to find his feet and a platform, was not an every-day event. They were curiosities that drew attention and an audience. Miss Eaton's purpose to have an address from an outsider was counted as a felicity and was openly popular.

One thing though Kitty did not enjoy; it was a parting with Miss Eaton before the hour of parting.

She told her scholars, "The last exercise will be the address of the chairman of the school committee of the town, and I must leave before it begins, I am sorry to say. I

must leave then, for I have quite a ride to take in a carriage, that I may reach the railroad station in time for the night train. Sorry, very sorry, but I run a risk in stopping as long as I do. So we will part before we part."

"Oh, dear," sighed Kitty, in the evening, "I don't like this saying good-bye beforehand, and to see her go out of the door and not say good-bye then, but I must see the chairman."

A teacher always has trusted helpers among the scholars, and Miss Eaton had discovered Kitty's readiness to help and soon learned her reliableness in helping. Her duty this night was to see the chairman of the committee and inform him of some work to be done in the school-room. It was a lengthy piece of information that the teacher could not give, owing to the chairman's late arrival that evening and the teacher's early departure. Kitty had seated herself in her usual place, now one of honor on a "back seat," and how sorry she afterwards was that she did not occupy her old humble place of her first day of school, on the front bench.

All the parts on the programme succeeded one another as regularly as the keys of an organ-board, though all the utterances were not as musical as organ-notes.

The teacher's brother was on hand. Phil heard Miss Eaton call him, "Ripley." Phil sat among the close tiers of the spectators in front and could easily catch her mode of salutation. Ripley Eaton's face was one of classic attractiveness.

"Han'sum as a pictur!" whispered a woman next to Kitty.

"Does you good jes' to look at him," softly replied another spectator.

Ripley Eaton was about to speak when the door opened and in walked the young man whom Phil and Kitty had rowed in their boat at the opening of this story! Could Kitty believe the testimony of her eyes?

Miss Eaton cordially welcomed this arrival and with the readiness of a previous acquaintance.

Phil heard him say, "Excuse me, Katharine, but happening to be in town, visiting, a few miles away, I heard that you had a closing night and could not help coming over."

Ripley Eaton appeared to recognize him as an old friend, Phil noticed, and he heard Ripley say, "I am going to speak or try to speak, and, sister, don't you think *he* ought to follow me?"

"Oh, no," replied the new arrival.

"You must. Please do!" urged the teacher.

Phil could hear all this and he served as ears through which Kitty afterwards heard the same.

Just now, Kitty's eager eyes were rendering her all the service they possibly could. Her heart beat excitedly. Gran'sir Tolman and Tinkham True occupied as spectators the seat before Kitty, and their broad shoulders made a fence behind which she was screened from any eyes on the platform. At the same time, Kitty's bright, searching eyes could safely look out and watch the unexpected scene opening upon the platform. Once the two old cronies fell to whispering and brought their heads so closely together that they deprived of their outlook the shining eyes just behind. Kitty laid gentle but firm hands on the obstructions before her and separated their shoulders.

"Oh, Toby, it's only Kit!" exclaimed Tinkham in a voice so loud that half in the house turned toward him. The impetuous Kitty made a neat, firm hammer of her hand and gave Tinkham's right ear a gentle yet actual cuff.

"Ow!" said Tinkham.

"Provoking!" thought Kitty, dropping her head and hiding her blushes when the people turned round again.

But Tinkham took the hint and kept at a little distance from Tobias, so that Kitty had once more her loophole in the fence.

The teacher's brother spoke effectively upon the subject of Personal Success, saying nothing very new, but giving new form to old ideas, while his enthusiastic manner and fine presence gave added interest to his words. He ended these with the reminder that personal success only makes satisfactory progress when a spiritual direction is given to it. Ripley Eaton then sat down.

"Won't *he* speak?" thought Kitty, her eyes looking through the hole in the fence, at a face fascinating her. Yes, he consented to say a few words.

When he rose to address the school, Kitty could see him still better. How closely, intently she watched him as if his life, her life, depended on the vivid photographing of his face on her memory.

"He has improved so much!" thought Kitty. "He does not look sick at all. Oh, he is looking this way! He can't see me!"

As he began to speak, Kitty thought everything about her changed. The broad shoulders in front of her became the side of a boat. She was off the shore so familiar to her. In her

hands were the oars that she had handled but rarely in the long interval since his departure. In the stern of the boat sat this stranger. He was talking to her, was he not? This was what he said to a maid in a boat:

"I will begin where my friend, Mr. Eaton, left off in his very just and forcible remarks," and if he had said, "and I will now talk to you, Kitty," it would have seemed very fitting. He went on: "My friend said we must give our work a spiritual direction if we would make satisfactory progress. In a very few words, let me lay stress on this thought, and ask if we are permitting—these young people here—" Did he say "you, Kitty, in this boat"? She listened breathlessly, leaning on her oars. "Are any of us permitting any obstructions to the best possible work? This past season, I noticed a gardener taking leaves off from a bed in the garden. Then he stooped and cleared about some shoots of a tender green. I watched his work. He said he had some very valuable bulbs there. They had started under the leaves which must be removed that the sun, the rain and air might have free access to the growth begun and the best work capable be done."

"Kitty!" did he here call out?

Kitty started as if clear and distinct her name had been sounded.

"So I say to myself," he continued, "we may have been growing things too much under the leaves, and we can't get our best results. We must take off the leaves and let all growth feel the open air and the gentle rain and the fullness of the sunshine. We need something more than human nature, something besides ourselves, something besides the human. That you may have the best success, ask God to help you, young people," or "Kitty," did he say?

"Take your souls out into the sunshine and rain of God's blessing. May it in all its fulness be yours."

The melody of his voice ceased. There was a silence in the room. Then followed a murmur of approbation. Kitty's boat suddenly was ashore, and the fascinating passenger had stepped out on the platform. The boat disappeared. Before her were Tinkham True and Gran'sir Tolman.

"A good sermon that, Tinkie!"

"Yes, you had better take it hum, Toby."

"Oh, how unfeeling is that Tinkham!" thought Kitty.

The stir following the silence was transferred to the neighborhood of the schoolroom-door.

Miss Eaton was going, her brother also, and was the late passenger in that dory leaving?

Kitty rose in her seat as if to detain them.

"Foolish!" she muttered. "I can't get to them through the crowd. And I must speak to the chairman too! What am I standing up for? What does *he* care for me?"

She sank back in her seat, and heard the chairman of the school committee roaring, "Now I suppose you want to hear a word from *me!*"

His voice in Kitty's ears became as monotonous and unintelligent as the surf roaring along the shore. She was off in a fisherman's dory again, but this time she was alone.

In the meantime, the late teacher and the two young men had started on their ride to the railroad station. The Eatons' companion had told them he would see them off and then go to the house where he was a guest.

Ripley Eaton was silent. The others were busily talking.

"That was quite an audience in your schoolroom," said the stranger, adding the word "cousin."

"Do you think so? The people were interested in what you and Ripley said."

"Are they people that you can interest easily?"

"I think so."

"I sometimes wonder just where it was that I had an interesting experience about a year ago, somewhere on the beach outside this village. I was yachting for my health, and we anchored off the land! The boat was going ashore and I went also and tramped along the beach, while our steward went to the village to do a little trading. Not feeling very strong —you know how weak I was—I got a boy to take me a piece in his boat, a fine fellow I thought. He got his sister to finish out the job, and she was a splendid oarsman. I—I—"

He paused as if hesitating whether to tell everything, but he soon resumed his story:

"I—I became much interested in her case. Perhaps I noticed her because I was so weak and she was so strong. You know when you are in a weak state physically, you are sensitive to the presence of what may be termed vitality. I could but notice the way she held her oars and bent her arms, how she carried her head, how she dipped her oars and feathered them—why, I seem to see that girl rowing, almost every day. I wake up in the night and see her. More than once I have been in an ugly dream, chased hard by a nightmare, and if that girl hasn't come in a boat to rescue me, and

the funny, singular thing has been that I have been on dry land and no matter, she comes in a boat, rowing that splendid stroke!"

"A very interesting young Amazon, cousin!" observed Miss Eaton.

"Yes," said her brother, "I am getting quite interested in that story—a young man in danger on dry land and a young woman rowing a boat to his rescue! I am not sure but that your mental processes need investigation. And as to the heroine, that famous young woman, ought not she to be hunted up? Kate, have you heard of any such wonder?"

"Never, never! I begin to doubt whether any such person ever existed. The whole affair looks like a hallucination, and as you suggest, cousin's mental processes need to be overhauled."

"Now you may laugh, but haven't you at the Harbor come across some young female-expert in rowing?" said the cousin.

"I have never seen that prodigy."

"I suppose not," replied her cousin, in a disappointed tone.

"If I had only known about the wonderful boatwoman and that fascinating brother, I would have hunted them up. They must be

on the beach, pleasant days, picking up jobs still."

Conversation along that line of thought flagged, and another subject was opened and followed.

"I am thankful, sister, to have this little outing," Ripley had remarked.

"When do you begin your work for the season?" asked his cousin.

"Oh, my—my mission-work?"

"Yes."

"Well, I don't know. It is my bishop's idea before I settle down to my parish work, but it is not known to me just when I begin such mission-work."

"There, Ripley," said Miss Eaton, "why don't you go to the Harbor? There is what they call 'the Hall.' Services have occasionally been held there. A Mr. Raynham held services at one time in the Hall and May Elliott helped him. You have not forgotten May Elliott. You met her——"

"Oh, I remember Miss Elliott and I know about the Harbor, for I taught school on the other side of the Harbor and I used to cross in a boat to the Harbor and do my shopping and——"

"Certainly! I haven't forgotten about the

school you taught, Ripley. Now, as you have some idea of the neighborhood, and want to start a mission-work somewhere, go to the Harbor and begin in the Hall. A little church may grow out of it. The Blakes will help you. May Elliott is away, in Europe, but she comes back in a few weeks. There are the Tolmans —old gran'sir, as they call him—he is just the one to go into this effort; and his two grandchildren, Phil and Kitty—they are not interested in things you call religious, but I think they would get interested, and they are fine young people——"

"Tolmans, Tolmans! Let me remember the name. Very well, I will think it over. I am inclined to think, Kate, *you* are the one to go there, and start this work. I don't see why you shouldn't, sister——"

"Women do start and continue such work, and I believe in it, but I am going to let you do it, this summer. Blake, Tolman, Elliott, remember those three names, Ripley."

"I will; Blake, Tolman, Elliott; Blake, Tolman, Elliott."

All this time, Kitty Tolman was still in the school-house. She had lingered to see the chairman of the town-committee and finally had an opportunity to give Miss Eaton's mes-

sage to him. Then she went home. Phil was already there.

"Oh, Kitty!" was the exclamation with which Phil greeted his sister. "Did you see *him?*"

Kitty gravely shook her head.

"Yes or no? Did you see *him?*"

"Why, yes, Phil, but I meant I didn't speak to him."

"You don't look pleased."

"Phil, how should I look? Where did you sit? Were you where you could see anything?"

"I'll tell you all about it, Kitty."

They sat by the side of a fire that gran'sir had kindled on the big hearth, for the evening was chilly, and then he had forsaken it, going to his little bedroom for the night.

"I'll put a stick on, first, Kitty," said Phil.

He stirred up the dying coals and laid on them a piece of a spar which had come ashore. He crouched over the fire as he told his story, and the light of the burning fragment played across his honest, open features.

"Now wasn't that strange, Kitty, to think he should turn up to-night?"

"Very, Phil, very."

"And we don't know his name yet."

"No, Phil."

"I'd like to find it out."

"I'd like, Phil, to take him to the mill and show him what you've been doing since he was here."

"I'd like to have him hear my sister read," declared Phil, proudly.

Kitty had acquired at the school a reputation as "one of the best readers in the deestrick."

"Oh, he wouldn't care," sighed Kitty.

"He would if he was sensible, Kitty. Well, I guess I'll do a sensible thing and go to bed. I want to start up the mill about daylight."

Kitty wanted to tarry by the open fire and think. She gave to the flames a few more pieces of the spar that had been saved from the deep, only to become smoke and gas going up into the greater deep of the atmosphere. There was the heat which also came from the wood, and Kitty this chilly night was comforted by it.

For some time, there was a young girl's face looking out of the shadows in the room, gazing into the warm, golden play of the firelight up the black chimney.

She went over the words that Ripley Eaton's companion had spoken that night and spoken

to her. The things growing under the leaves! Kitty had had a purpose to make the most of herself. She had been trying to do something, but had she done what she could? Was there not in her case something growing under leaves?

Did she take to her Heavenly Father her hopes, her efforts, and ask Him to bless them and make everything possible of these?

The girlish face staring at the flames in the black chimney, looked very sober.

Did she pray? To the stunted things within, had she given the better sunlight of God's blessing, the open free winds of His favor, the rains of refreshment He alone can send?

"I don't pray," she murmured. She sometimes went to church, St. John's, which was half a mile from the Centre, but even then a mile and a half from the Harbor. Not often did she go to church. She did not care to read her Bible. She did not very often think of serious subjects like her own spiritual improvement, her need of God and a life of prayer and trust and consecration.

And yet all this time, was not God, her Heavenly Father, waiting to pour the sunshine and the shower of His blessing down upon her?

How guilty she felt!

In her consciousness of neglect, the warm blood mounted to her cheeks and crimsoned them. How remiss she was!

She felt that it would be a relief to tell God that she was sorry. She could do that at least. She hesitated. She looked about her. She could hear only the gentle noise of the fire. She was alone. Why not say, just there, she was sorry? Why not look up to God and open to Him the door that she had so stoutly been barring and repeatedly bolting?

How would it do to wait until she was in her room? No, she was urged to do it just here. Something seemed to be pressing so heavily upon her that she could not resist the better impulse.

"I—I'll tell Him I am sorry and ask Him to forgive me and help me," she murmured. "He won't turn me away." No, God never turns, never will turn any penitent away.

It was like the thought, the purpose of the gardener in removing the leaves, so that to the priceless things of the soul, the divine influence might have access, bringing sunshine, rain, warmth.

"Yes, I might as well now as any time; I will do it now," she told herself.

If any one had come into the room, they would have seen a figure bowed in prayer and outlined faintly against the now sinking flames in the fireplace. It was a little thing she did, but things tiny and weak grow in God's garden. In Kitty's soul there was to be a growth, a budding and blossoming.

CHAPTER XV.

"DON'T BE OFFISH."

THE old mill was steadily grinding away. Phil was working out a few problems in arithmetic while the mill was doing its duty and changing corn to meal.

He heard a footstep.

He looked up.

"That is the man," thought Phil, "who spoke in the school-house, Miss Eaton's brother. He is handsome, everybody says, and he is to hold services in the Hall. Well, he can't have me and I told Aunt Lyddy so."

"Good-morning!" said a bright, agreeable voice.

"Good-morning!" said Phil, curtly.

Phil took gingerly the hand held out to him and resolved to be very short in his answers.

"Is this your mill?"

Phil shook his head.

"I—I mean—of course you don't own it—"

"Why not?" asked Phil promptly, fiercely, and in the tone of a challenge.

"Perhaps you do. Boys are very smart sometimes——"

"I don't like that," thought Phil. "Kitty says that is patronizin'."

"Boardman Blake owns it," he said aloud, stiffly.

The young clergyman looked with curious interest on this resolute, intelligent boy-face.

"I am not getting hold of him," he thought. "He is bluffing me, and yet I want this boy. I must have him."

He asked, "Is the work hard, Phil?"

"Phil! He's too familiar," thought Phil. "I am not going to tell him how hard it is."

"Oh, I get along."

"You have to run nights?"

"Sometimes."

"Can't be very social down here, stormy nights. Anything but that, I should think."

A head-shake from Phil, but no voice.

"The next thing he will say, will be, 'Come to the services.' I'm going to stay mum," resolved Phil, and his lips went together firmly.

Ripley Eaton did not stay long. He saw that the young miller for some reason was shy of him and did not wish him to stay. He

therefore said nothing about the proposed services at the Hall.

"I will come down to see you again, Phil," he said as he went out of the mill. "Good-bye, good-bye!"

"Good-bye!" Phil answered, in a very formal tone.

He reported this visit to Kitty and also the young minister's promise to come again.

"I don't want him to come," added Phil.

"Oh, let him come, Phil. He may help you. He is a nice-looking man and I would let him."

"Of course! 'Nice-looking!' you're a girl. Yes, girls always let nice-looking callers come."

Kitty did not make any reply to this, and her silence disappointed Phil. Willing to justify himself in his unwillingness to receive the clergyman, he said:

"You can see what he wants of me, Kitty."

"What is it he wants?"

"He wants me to help in those services at the Hall."

"If he does, why not help him, Phil?"

"Help him?"

"Yes! don't be offish!"

"Offish!"

"Yes, I mean don't be strange! Don't stand at one side! Don't be queer!"

"What a dictionary you are gettin' to be!"

"Have to be when I am talking to boys, you see, and they appreciate it as you yourself show."

"Appreciate! more dictionary!"

"Yes, and it is a good thing. It is not a lion that will eat you. Now Phil, as I said, don't be offish and——"

"Offish?"

"Yes, offish, see! I have written it on a piece of paper and you——"

"Where is it?"

Phil looked at the little piece of white paper carrying the one significant word.

"Offish! Nonsense!" he exclaimed and left the room in disgust.

"That is not like Phil!" thought Kitty. Not at all, but he was like some people who know their duty but fight against it. Phil's conscience was disturbed.

Soon after this came a peculiarly disagreeable night and Phil started for the mill. The wind blew in rough, violent spasms across the marsh. It brought mist and a chilly atmosphere from the black sea. Phil poked slowly along the road to the mill, listlessly swinging his lantern. He halted in one place and hung his light over the edge of Sandy Creek.

"Tide has turned," he said, "and is running out. It is time to start up the mill and I had better be on the trot."

The old mill was more dismal than ever. He unlocked the door, threw it open and entered.

He heard a noise.

Was it on the stairway?

"Hullo!" he shouted.

Then he listened.

Was it a step on the rickety stairway, making it creak, or only the wind forcing its way like a house-breaker into the old woodwork, and did some aged board make its harsh protest?

Phil held up his lantern.

"Don't see anything!" he murmured. "Must be the wind."

He went up the stairway a short distance, but paused when he heard a noise in another quarter, for this plainly was the wind.

"Ah, I see now. Just the wind a fussin' everywhere! No use in goin' further. All right, all right!"

And yet he gave occasional glances—very short ones—at the dark stairway in the corner.

"Now I'll start up things," he said. "Wake up, old man!" he shouted.

At Phil's invitation, the "old man" supposed to be below, roused himself, shook off his burden of sloth and sleep, and began to push round the heavy turbine water-wheel. All the mill-machinery responded. The venerable structure shook as if a palsy had set in. It was a relief to hear the noise of the mill's activity rather than the sound of the wind, moaning and groaning, whining and whizzing about and through the old building, as if it were a doleful musical instrument and the wind were a very active performer on it.

Phil no longer shrugged his shoulders.

"Ha—ha! Good-evening!" suddenly cried a most cheerful, cordial voice at the door. After the voice came the clergyman. What welcome music there can be in a human voice!

"Good-evening!" said the surprised Phil, and he said it agreeably.

He had been saluted so suddenly that his answer could not well be "offish." Still, he did not come forward and take the minister's outstretched hand.

Mr. Eaton preferred not to notice that Phil had refused to shake hands with him and remarked, "Then I did not get into the mill in season to help you start up, though I was outside."

"Oh, I get along, and besides, you don't know how to start up."

"But can't one learn, Phil?"

"Oh, I 'spose so," replied Phil, thinking all the time about those "services," and resolved the minister should not get ahead of him and suddenly surprise him into a promise to go to the Hall.

"Is it hard?" asked the clergyman. "I want to learn how to—to—be a miller. I wish I had been down here to get a lesson. Now if you have to be off some day, I might help you and take your place."

This touched Phil. He advanced a pace or two toward Mr. Eaton. Still he made no reply. He was thinking of the service-trap that might be sprung upon him. The clergyman preferred not to notice the young miller's glumness.

"I did not know, Phil, but you might like a book to read, and up at the Centre I found in a store a history with nice pictures in it. I'll bring it down some day."

This pleased Phil. He now advanced another step toward the formidable being.

"But I did bring one thing, this here!"

Mr. Eaton touched a neat-looking package.

"I asked Aunt Lyddy Blake—where I board

—if she did not have a lunch for a boy at the mill, and here is some of Aunt Lyddy's sponge cake."

It might have seemed as if Aunt Lyddy's sponge cake would have softened any hard will to its own consistency, but there was the service-net that might be thrown over an unsuspecting miller, and he did not advance to receive it. So the clergyman was obliged to take the package to Phil.

"I—I am not hungry, Mr. Eaton."

"Oh, you are not? Well, I will just put it down on that bench."

He looked disappointed, but Phil was not prepared yet to haul down his colors and surrender.

"Phil," said Mr. Eaton, "what was that noise I heard when outside the building—happening to go round the corner to look off on the harbor. You hadn't started up. Don't hear it now of course, but then, outside, it sounded like some one groaning up above."

He had gone to the dark stairway.

"Had it not better be investigated? You are busy, and then you may not care to go up, but I will step up there, Phil."

"May not care?" thought Phil. "Does he think I'm afraid? Guess I'll show him."

Phil did not wish to show any dependence on Mr. Eaton's lunch-package or Mr. Eaton's stock of courage.

"I'll take my lantern," said Phil, with dignity, "and go up and look round, Mr. Eaton. If you went up, you might get in, for the floor is weak."

What "getting in" might involve, the clergyman did not comprehend. He smiled, and with interest watched Phil springing up from step to step.

"I'm up!" shouted Phil from the top stair in a triumphant tone.

"All right, Phil! I'll stay here and keep watch, Phil."

"I think you've got to!" soliloquized Phil in a low tone. "I don't need you up here, for I can get along without you."

Mr. Eaton turned away from the stairway and prepared to stand his watch, though not strongly encouraged by the struggling light of a smoky oil lamp secured to the southern wall of the mill.

Phil did not find any one up there in the deserted mill-loft. He saw in one corner some old clothes suspended from a nail. They had been left by Boardman Blake one day when in a philanthropic mood, which was very often.

"Some poor feller may be shipwrecked and come here and need them," thought Boardman.

But no "poor feller" had come to appropriate the clothes, and glancing at them, Phil walked to the other side of the loft.

"Guess I am not afraid," he murmured. "I don't see anything. I have half a mind to call Mr. Eaton up. No, he would think I needed him and was afraid, and I'd rather be independent."

He walked about bravely, but how the mill trembled! Phil's "old man" in the basement was very energetic and he kept things stirring below in lively fashion.

"Ah!" exclaimed Phil, "there's one more place I guess I'll look into! I don't need that Mr. Eaton. Guess I can get along well enough without him."

As Phil was stepping about the floor, he came to a place where the boards were loose. People generally do not intend to make a misstep and Phil had no such intention, but he did set his foot down in the wrong place. The boards were weak and loose, and Phil broke through the flooring. Fortunately, he saved his lantern from breaking, but he was suspended by his arms between two beams, his

legs dangling down somewhere, but where he could not precisely say.

His first thought was, "I told Mr. Eaton he might get in, and I am 'in' myself!"

His next thought was how to get out. It seemed easy enough.

He carefully moved his lantern to one side and rested it on an undisturbed board. "I don't want Mr. Eaton to see my legs, for they are down there somewhere! Now I'll raise myself," said Phil, but he could not get up high enough to free himself from the confinement of this ugly trap! What was the matter?

He found he could use one arm, the right, well enough, but when he tried to raise the other, it hurt him and he was forced to stop!

Was he then not only caught but actually held fast in this trap?

How was he to get out of it?

"Perhaps Mr. Eaton will see my legs hanging down and come up and get me. I hate to call to him. I guess he will see my legs."

The thought that a pair of legs might be dangling down through the flooring above and it would be well for him to look that way, did not seem to occur to Mr. Eaton. Phil finally came to this conclusion and said, "Guess I'll stir a bit and he may see me."

He now began to wriggle his legs.

"I'll kick—awfully," thought Phil.

It was all in vain.

Mr. Eaton would have been very much excited by the sight of a pair of tumultuously wriggling legs above him, but he did not look in that direction.

"Have I got to holler to him?" thought Phil. "I don't want to do that, but this wriggling is hurting my arm. I'll raise myself—ow! It hurts. I must stop that. Oh dear! shall I tell him I've done the very thing I said he might do—'get in'? I've got to do something to get out. The next thing—I shall drop! Here goes for a 'holler!'"

He raised his voice and shouted, "Mr. Eaton! Mr. Eaton!"

There came no response.

"Oh dear! What a horrible racket this old mill makes! Why couldn't they make mills that would go decent? I'll call once more for I shall have to drop soon, but I hate to call at all! I don't want him to find me but I'll holler once more."

He shouted, "Mr. Eaton!"

It did not bring a rescuer.

"I'll wriggle my legs again."

The wriggling again was in vain.

An unpleasant alternative here confronted Phil.

What if Mr. Eaton, tired of waiting for Phil and concluding Phil did not wish to see him, should go off and leave Phil wriggling and hallooing, the old mill making its malicious turmoil all the time?

"I couldn't blame him for going, for I've been real 'offish.' Oh dear, what would Kitty say if she should find me here!"

In his bewilderment he shouted "Kitty! No—no, I mean Mr. Eaton-n-n-n!"

No response and the mill kept on jarring and thundering and growling and rumbling, making all sorts of extra and unnecessary noises. Indeed, it almost seemed as if "the old man" of the mill had got an idea of the situation of the young miller, that exacting master, and was now making all these noises in return for slave-labor demanded at many unreasonable hours. The old man seemed to be horribly grumbling:

"Booh-booh—this for wakin' me up—booh-booh—any hour of the day or night—booh-booh—and keepin' me at work so long—booh-booh—so late at night—booh-booh—and not thinking of my chills down here and rheumatism and asthma—booh-booh—and now I've

got him, jest let me make the most of it—booh-booh—he's in a trap—trap—trap——"

Here it sounded louder and louder, threatening to grow into a deafening roar.

"Oh, this is tiresome!" thought Phil. "I can't hold on here much longer. Yelling won't do and kicking won't do—and I'll drop one of these loose boards down! That will make him look!"

"But supposing his head should be just under the board—just under it—and—" was an objection raised.

"I—can't help it and don't know as I care," replied Phil.

He shouted, "Heads from under! Here goes!"

Down tumbled a board, though Phil did not hear it strike anywhere.

Neither did Mr. Eaton hear it; he saw it fall. Then looking up, he saw a pair of legs now working energetically! Those mysterious legs!

"Oh!" groaned the clergyman. "Trouble there!"

Up the stairs he bounded.

He caught sight of the lantern-light in the loft, and hastening toward it, he saw the young miller held helplessly as any mill-rat in a trap.

"My boy!" he cried in a tone delightful by reason of its sympathy. "Can't you get up?"

"Why, no sir—my—arm——"

"There! Let me lift you! I'll be easy! Steady—steady—I'll draw you out!"

Gently Phil was withdrawn from the trap. Was ever a rescue more acceptable?

"Thank you, sir."

"Hurt you, Phil? Where was it?"

"Only my arm."

"Too bad! Well, lean on me!"

"I can walk."

"Very well—I will go ahead and I'll take the lantern along. How did you fall in there?"

"Oh, the boards are not fastened and I slipped through."

"Too bad."

They walked to the head of the stairs.

"What is that clothing hanging up?"

"Oh, some things Boardman Blake brought here and hung up. He thought some shipwrecked man might be along. 'They'll do some poor feller good,' said he."

"That is just like him. I thought I saw them, or one piece, lift a little."

Was anybody beneath them, somebody hiding, somebody standing up, his form draped by an old army coat whose skirts touched the floor?

"Nonsense!" thought the clergyman, turning away.

They descended the steps carefully.

"Now, Phil, you go home and I'll stay and run the mill."

"Oh, no, sir! The grist is out—I'll stop the mill."

How quiet the old shell seemed then! It was but for a moment. Mr. Eaton started toward the stairway, exclaiming, "There is the noise I heard outside. Stop a minute!"

"I heard it too before starting the mill."

"I'll look into it," said Mr. Eaton. He sprang up the stairway, and holding his lantern near the clothing dangling from its nail cried, "It moves, Phil, just as I thought! And what a noise!"

He cried again, "Ha-ha! I've found out the mystery!"

"What is it, Mr. Eaton?"

"Why, there is a hole in the wall just behind these clothes, and the wind drawing through, made that strange sound. Hark! do you hear it?"

"Oh, yes! that is what bothered me."

"And the wind blew out the clothing! So that is all explained. Like a lot of the mysteries of this life, only wind behind them."

He came down the stairway, joined Phil, insisted on putting the miller's sprained arm into a sling and then they left the old mill to the shadows and the wind.

When they separated from one another, Phil repeated his thanks. He showed no "offishness" in the parting. He even stared at the clergyman's shadowy form, and complained to himself, "He might have asked me to those services, I should have thought." When Phil stepped into the house, gran'sir had gone to his little bedroom, but Phil found Kitty seated by the kitchen-fire and busily reading. She was anxious to make every minute a vessel bringing her some kind of cargo, and she sailed her ships faithfully.

"Oh, how did you do that?" she asked when she saw that arm of Phil's in its sling. "Poor boy! Let me look at the trouble!"

How soothing was Kitty's sympathy, how caressing her touch, and how refreshing was the bath she gave the injured member!

"You are a real good doctor, Kitty. A lot of the women ought to be doctors. A sprain?"

"Yes, Phil, it is just sprained but you must be careful," said Doctor Tolman. "We must look after you. But tell me how it happened. Poor boy!"

"Oh Kitty, I've been real 'offish.'" He told her everything, the clergyman's call, the miller's entanglement in the flooring, the clergyman's kindness all the way along and the miller's coldness and reserve.

"Now, Kitty, wasn't I 'offish'? I want a piece of paper with the word on it to carry it round——"

"I've got one, Phillie, right here—" She pulled a slip of paper out of her pocket.

"Oh, you don't need to carry one round, Kitty."

Kitty said emphatically, "Yes, I do, Phil. I look at it sometimes and I say, 'Now you must not act strange and queer and stand at one side. You must step forward——'"

"Oh—oh—I have made up my mind not to stand at one side. I have acted like a fool, but I'm not going to stand at one side any longer."

"One side of what?"

"Those services at the Hall, Kitty, and I've made up my mind not to wait to be asked, but I'm going to offer to help."

"You're a dear, good boy, Phil," said Kitty, "and that is what I told Mr. Eaton to-day when he spoke to me about asking you. He said he did not know how you might take to it, but I told him I thought you would offer."

"You did? What made you think so when I acted so?"

"Oh, I thought I knew you."

"Kitty, I'm going to kiss you good-night now. I don't think any boy has got so good a girl for a sister as I have—no, not in all the world."

Candle in hand, he slowly went up stairs. Kitty still stayed by the kitchen fire, thinking, thinking. Then in the dying firelight, she knelt and prayed. It was a new spirit that now filled her, that seemed to get outside of her and it made a new and peculiar and peaceful atmosphere about her. She was no longer in the old, discontented, unhappy mood, her soul fighting against and bruising itself against her surroundings. She now accepted them because she saw her Heavenly Father had set her life in their midst, and until she could change them and make beautiful and winning, what was rough and rude and homely, she must bear everything contentedly. It was this spirit of acquiescence in God's will, of trust in Him, that gave to every place in which she was, a certain kind of beauty. It fell like drapery over the bare walls. Spaces empty through poverty it filled with comfort and peace and joy this world can not give.

"Don't know what it is!" reflected Phil that very night. "Something though has happened to Kitty."

CHAPTER XVI.

PHIL'S ONE.

AND the "minister"—as people called Mr. Eaton—was coming! "Just to make a call!" Mr. Eaton had said.

Kitty was all in a flutter. She knew everything about gran'sir's home was humble, but she was resolved it should be neat. She made her broom fly backward and forward about the door, before the door, behind the door—a thing not always done in some homes.

"Oh, that carpeting!" she exclaimed. "I know what I can do with the strip Aunt Lyddy gave me."

She laid it on the bare, brown floor in the diminutive entry.

"It gives an air to the whole house," Phil declared with pride. "Takes you to fix things, Kit!"

"And, oh, the nasturtiums!" said Kitty. The walls without were gay with these climbers in jackets of yellow and orange, and Kitty

knew she could coax them to perform within the house.

She had no vases, but behind the clock and the little looking-glass, she hid several bottles of water and in these set the ends of her nasturtium ladders. One bottle she concealed in the depths of the old, worn cupboard. The door was carelessly left ajar, and out of it projected a green nasturtium ladder along whose line appeared the gray-jacketed climbers.

The big fireplace she filled with boughs of green fir brought from the murmuring forest back of Boardman Blake's home. There were two pieces of furniture now leaning against the shed-wall stiff and sedate that she could hardly have decorated with nasturtium-vines or fir-boughs, but she had notified them that she wished to "fix them up," Phil and gran'sir, and had proceeded accordingly. She had "barbered" them both, had laundered a collar for each, and in due time expected a transfer from the shed-wall to the kitchen. When all her work of preparation was over, she stood in the centre of the room and looked about her.

"Oh, so poor, so poor!" she exclaimed, looking around her a second time.

It was all that, a poor home, very, but

Kitty's cheerful self seemed to get outside of her and diffuse itself everywhere. Then there were the vines and blossoms decorating this room. Its picturesqueness pleased her. The dimples in her cheeks nestled deeper and the sunshine of her smiles filled them. With almost childish delight, she saw the pretty effect of the vines. Yes, everything ready for the "minister's" call. The next moment, she was impulsively darting at any new object whose appearance might be improved by a little decoration, smiling and singing as she worked, then standing off to see the effect of these touches of her deft fingers. She could not though appreciate the undefinable charm of her own rare and beautiful spirit unconsciously escaping from her.

In the midst of all her activity, a voice said pleasantly, "Good-day, Miss Kitty! Fine weather?"

"Oh, Mr. Eaton! That you? I did not know you were coming just this moment, but I am glad to see you any time."

"Thank you! Well—well!"

Then he slowly looked about the room.

"Are you getting ready for a picnic? This is very pretty."

"Oh, no!" said Kitty, modestly declining

the compliment and yet delighted to receive it.

"You have made it a bower, really."

"Oh, no"—she said without—"Oh, yes"—she said within.

"Sit down, Mr. Eaton, please!"

The one rocking-chair in the Tolman domestic world she pulled forward for the "minister." It had a rough frame but a soft cushion.

"Your grandpa and Phil in?"

"Yes, sir, they're coming."

"I want to get Phil to come to the Hall-services, but I thought he seemed as if he did not want me to say anything."

"Oh, he will come. I think he will offer his help."

"That is good. It is so much easier when others are interested, you know."

"You said he acted as if he did not want to be invited or to have you say anything. He told me all about it, and how kind you were and helped him out of that hole."

"Oh, that was nothing."

"But he said it was something. And if he acted queer about it, offish, why, sometimes people do it when their consciences are troubling them about their duty."

"Ha—ha! That is an encouraging view to

take of things, and I'll try to remember it when people in the village act as if they did not want to come to the Hall. I will say their consciences are troubling them and they will soon come."

"But don't you think they turned out well at the first service, Sunday? I counted thirty-five and that is a good number for us, and I know of others who are coming."

"That is doing well. I would like to furnish my platform for the services."

"I had a dream that it was furnished."

"Won't you tell me about it?"

"It was only last night, and I saw a communion-rail along the edge of the platform, which I thought had been carpeted nicely. Then the old hall-desk had been set over at one side for a pulpit, and I dreamed that on the other side, somebody had put a lecturn and you stood there looking round—and then I awoke!"

"In the midst of the preparations and those coming to an end? I hope that was not a prophecy."

"No, for I dreamed again and looked once more and I said, 'Why, that is St. John's church!'"

"That is encouraging! Now I shall have

to get you to dream about something else I am interested in."

"I will, and have it all fixed up."

"That is a Sunday-school."

"We can have that."

"I am asking everybody to bring some other one. To come yourself and bring another, that is a good rule."

"Yes, sir. I will bring somebody, and Phil is good for one, I know."

"Thank you—I like that Phil."

This reference to Phil led to an extended talk about Phil, his age, his work, his amount of schooling, his future. His name proved to be a side-track carrying the conversation away some distance from the subject of Sunday-school, for the young man remembered a question he had been desiring to ask. He recalled his conversation with his sister and his cousin the evening that the district school closed.

Ripley Eaton was a "little absent-minded sometimes" his friends thought. He would listen patiently to a conversation, smile and nod as if he had heard everything most distinctly. His thoughts might be somewhere else though, and the final impression of that conversation would not always be the most

accurate. Obliging friends had made him aware of his fault and he was good-naturedly trying to heed his critics. The final impression received from that conversation was that a certain boy at the Harbor was an unusual boatman and this boy had a sister. He now spoke as he remembered.

"Do you know of a boy hereabouts who is an excellent rower—I mean a boy who rows better than any of his mates——"

"We think Tony Watkins is very good for his years. You have to remember his years, of course."

"Has he a sister?"

"Yes, sir."

"Then that is the one; just a friend of mine wanted to know about a boy who he thought was a very good boatman, and the boy had a sister."

Tony was a boy of eight, the youngest of a large family. His parents had only one daughter. She was the oldest of the Watkins tribe and was now a married woman of thirty.

"I have got the very case," thought the young clergyman. "Lucky!"

Kitty now had a question she wished to ask. She blushed at the thought of it as if she

were opening a door and letting out a secret, but she began, "Who was—" She hesitated and looked toward the door.

She did not finish this sentence and ask who was the gentleman that spoke after Mr. Eaton at the exhibition in the school-house. She had caught the sound of a cough out in the entry and the thud of a cane striking the floor. The last notes of a boy's careless whistle were also heard. Gran'sir and Phil now appeared, one sheepishly following the other, each stiffly conscious of a "fixed-up" look, and almost wishing they were back in the shed, and leaning against its wall.

"Be—very—glad to—to—see you, sir," said gran'sir, confusedly but cordially. Phil was blushing, but smiling and holding out a ready hand. The young man took the position of a member of the family and saluted the old shoemaker as "gran'sir" and at once asked Phil, "How is that arm?"

"Oh, it is getting along sir, fine! Kitty doctored it and—you helped me—a lot."

But Phil was thinking of something else. He reflected upon the little slip of paper in his pocket that he had solicited of Kitty, and he was resolved to attend promptly to his duty this time.

"Don't you want me to help at the Hall, sir?"

"Preach, say? I shall be delighted to have you."

Phil blushed as the others laughed.

"I mean the—coming—and—helping to fix you—I mean to fix the Hall up."

"Oh, ever and ever so much, and really I think I do need some fixing up. It is a very important work."

"I'll do what I can," said Phil, not at all disconcerted now.

"And come to Sunday-school?"

"Yes, sir."

"And bring somebody?"

"I'll try—no, I will!"

"That is fine. Your one will count."

"And there is Kitty's one—I know she will have somebody," said Phil.

"Yes, I will get somebody," promised Kitty.

"And I'm a-goin' to speak to Tinkum True. I'll git him to jine a Bible Class—me and Tinkum—if you have one," said gran'sir.

"Oh, certainly! Now I am ever so much encouraged. This is a lovely place."

He was flashing out some of his magnetic qualities, an enthusiasm and a frankness like a

child's. Kitty looked very much pleased ; so did gran'sir and Phil.

The clergyman talked with gran'sir about his health and his work—two never-failing subjects of conversation—and then rising from his chair, asked, " Before I go, may I not pray with the family, gran'sir ? "

" Obleejed to have ye, sir."

They all knelt and said " Our Father " together, and then Mr. Eaton's voice was alone heard, commending the little flock to a Divine Shepherd's care.

" Now that's a min'ster woth havin' ! " declared gran'sir when the young folks were alone with him. " And Kitty, ye made the place purty as a pictur. I've a great mind to go and git Tinkum to show him what can be done. He takes me to his house when he fixes up and says, ' See that ! ' "

" Oh, I guess not, gran'sir. You know you're lame."

Gran'sir was disappointed, but Phil comforted him by saying, " I may see Tinkum today and I'll tell him."

Phil soon went off to the mill, saying to himself. " Phil's one, Phil's one ! Where will Phil get it ? I'll have it though."

Phil looking ahead saw Boardman Blake

halting on the edge of the cart-path to the mill and looking down. It was a place where the path ran along a high bank, and at the foot of the bank, Boardman Blake saw a—hawk and a dove? They certainly were like these in some respects. Just before Boardman came, the hawk with sharp, greedy eyes looking down, had said imperatively, "Here, take it and draw on it good—this way! Take it in your mouth good—now, then, Tony!"

"I don't want to, Bill," said the dove, appealingly.

"Oh, yes! A lot of people do it, Tony. You just draw in—this way!"

A greedy mouth here gave instructions.

"You then puff it out! There, try it! You've got to, any way; there for ye!"

The terrified dove was endeavoring to follow the nauseating instructions, the hawk looking down with malicious satisfaction and enjoying the wry faces of the dove.

"Here, here, don't stop, Tony! You won't make a man if you don't keep on. Try it some more!" commanded the hawk.

"Here, here!" roared a voice above the dove and the hawk. "Stop that! Bill Hawkins, don't make Tony do that! Take that cigar out of the boy's mouth!"

The hawk and the dove looked up in astonishment. A face big and benevolent, flushed with a sense of indignant justice, was looking down. The hawk's glance was sharp, then angry. The dove hung its head as if guilty, but looked up again, relieved and happy.

"Boys—Bill—I want you to throw that thing away. Now it's one thing to start a habit and another to stop it. Do you realize it?"

"Oh, I'm not goin' to stop here to get a lecture," cried the hawk, and up the bank he angrily fluttered, then going toward the mill.

"I told Bill I didn't want to," moaned the dove.

"I don't doubt it, Tony. I've told Bill more than once he'd find it hard to quit his tobacco. I see he is chewing and smoking about all the time. You see it's easy to start a thing and it is an entirely different matter to stop it."

"Yes," assented Tony, "I—I 'spose so."

"Now don't forget it. It's much easier to start a thing than to stop it, for this may be very hard. What if after you began to smoke, you had to keep on this way—this way——"

Here Boardman imitated the motions of the smoker's mouth.

"Or if chewing, you had to keep on this way, this way—this way always!"

Tony shook his head and declared he would not like to do it.

"Well, then, that is what it amounts to. Never begin, and you are all right. That is the best way to do with things, which when you start them, it is very hard ever, ever to stop."

"I know it," wisely remarked the dove, deeply impressed by his object lesson. Here he fluttered up the bank and moved towards the mill, for Boardman had turned to go home.

Tony sauntered along the old cart-path, now and then looking across the marsh to the sea where the white sails were dwindling like the wings of birds sinking to hidden nests amid the billows.

When Tony came to the mill-door, he halted. He might not have stopped here but passed on to patter with bare feet across the dam, but he noticed that the door of the mill was ajar. It aroused his curiosity. Peeping into the dusky depths of this old relic, he heard a voice behind him, saying softly, "Any one in there."

"That you?" asked the dove, turning round and looking up into the face of the hawk. "That you, Bill?"

The hawk had come up from the rear of the mill whither he had retreated before the indignation of that anti-tobacco advocate, Boardman Blake, like a leaf blown away by a gusty wind.

"Me, Tony? Of course! That old fool of a Boardman Blake gone?"

"He ain't an old fool."

"Well, then, a young one!"

"Boardman Blake has gone home," said Tony with dignity. "Yes, he's home now."

"Oh, you needn't be so particular. Take that!"

Here Bill tweaked Tony's ear in return for information needlessly definite.

"Ow—w—w!"

"Hush, Tony! Who's in here? Say, I'll find out! Phil!" he shouted.

There was no answer.

"All right! come in, Tony!" was the cordial invitation of the new proprietor. "I own this!"

Bill entering the mill boldly, strutted about pompously. The dove hopped in timidly, looking about shyly, yet very glad to have this opportunity to inspect the institution.

"Never had so good a chance before!" thought Tony, eying everything with open

wonder. The hopper, the very spout to whose mouth clung a few kernels of corn, and that part of a big millstone which by stretching his neck he could see, were all objects of his admiration. The little bucket that in the hour of grinding never had an end, that slipping down, then coming up, forever and forever kept catching the meal, were specially admired.

"'Taint very noisy in here," remarked Tony.

"Of course it isn't," said Bill, strutting about and directing an evil eye toward every object, wondering where he could slip in his greedy, grasping hands and work mischief.

The new proprietor hummed in pride a dancing tune and kept on staring and thinking.

It was very still in the mill, and Bill could hear the idle swash of the water around the piers holding up the structure. It suggested something to his lively imagination.

"Oh, say, Tony!"

"What, Bill?"

"You ever see this old thing a-goin'?"

"Guess I have!" replied Tony, complacently. "More times than you can shake a stick at."

"Did you ever see it started up, Tony? Started up, my boy, at the beginnin'—oh, so slow—then goin' faster and faster and louder

and louder—fuzz, fuzz, fuzz—round and round, this way?"

Here he unexpectedly caught up the unsuspecting Tony and swung him round and round, turning him over and over like a wheel.

"Oh—I—ain't the mill!" Tony was screaming.

"Yes, you be, and you got to be grist too!"

Poor Tony! "Don't—don't, Bill!"

"I can't stop the mill—I can't, Tony!"

Tony's big eyes were now bigger than ever. His face was crimson with the blood flowing into his bewildered brain.

Bill bending down was like a fiend gloating over his work, while his nose looked more like a hawk's beak than ever.

The mill finally stopped.

The dove much shaken up and disturbed, was deposited like a discarded meal-bag on the dusty floor.

The hawk's sharp eyes now glanced about to discover what mischief he might next attempt.

"Oh, Tony!" he said, affectionately.

"What?" said the dove in a grieved tone, eying the hawk suspiciously.

"Did you ever see the mill a-startin' up in the first place? It begins—you know—so—

so slowly—easy—then faster—so—just a little faster—faster now——"

"But Boardman—Phil—will come!" suggested the prudent and yet the desirous Tony.

Here the hawk approached the long post projecting from the floor. It did look like an arm stuck up invitingly, only waiting to be gripped and worked by any one who wished. Was "the old man" below inclined to be a tempter, and did he want some one to reach out a careless hand to meddle with a troublesome trap?

"Oh, they won't come, Tony! Why, it can be stopped any moment, any—you say. All you've got to do is to lift this right here. Oh, no, you don't want to see it and you—shan't!"

The hawk skipped tantalizingly away. This only inflamed the dove with a desire to see the thing started.

"I—would like to see it just a little way—and—you can stop it any time—you know. Just a little, Bill."

"Yes, I will, Tony—just to oblige you—yes, I will! See here!"

The hawk was familiar with the starting of the mill and lifted the post and then waited to hear the sound of the stirring of the "old

man." There was only a slight tremor at first and then an increasing jar and then—

"Oh—oh! she moves!" cried the dove, pointing at the runner. Tony clapped his hands. The consciousness of power was so sweet, and here was this great wonder started up! Louder now! Every member of the waiting mill-chorus was raising its voice, making some note of discord in the jargon of the hour, and soon the full thunder of the machinery was under way!

"There! There for ye! Ain't that nice! How's that, Tony?"

"Yes—yes, but you stop it, Bill, cos—cos——"

Here the dove, only a quantity of prudence now, glanced timidly at the door.

"Somebody comin', Tony? I'll just, just see. You stay here and I'll be right back."

Here the hawk slipped out of the door and left the trembling dove all alone. But why did not the hawk speedily return? The dove went to the door and looked out, but could see nothing of the hawk. Was he not coming back at all? The dove was now in pitiful terror.

"I'll—I'll stop it!" he gasped, and turned back into the mill.

This process of stopping a mill in full operation—so simple in theory—was not so simple on actual trial. Where—how—to what extent should the dove apply his muscle? Doves don't have much muscle any way. It was an hour of agony. He was a plump dove, very, but plumpness is not a necessary qualification for milling. He looked at his plump hands, his plump wrists, and then worked his plumpness hopelessly. He fluttered about in abject terror.

Hark! Was some one coming?

This old mill did keep up such a furious, unnecessary turmoil! He went to the door.

"If there isn't Phil a-comin'!" groaned Tony.

Oh, couldn't he possibly stop the mill before Phil got to the door? He flew back, went at it again, but went in vain. He looked out of the door once more.

"There—is—Boardman!" he gasped.

Yes, off at some distance. Boardman had made several stops on the way home and was now heading that way, but no matter. Tony thought he might back down to the mill, and what a broad back and what big hands he had for the suppression of rebellion at the mill!

"Oh, he is comin'!" cried Tony. He

had turned round? Yes, Boardman had faced about and was coming. And what was it Boardman had said, something about the ease with which things could be started, the difficulty in stopping them? Oh, this dove would never start things, never smoke or chew—no matter what other doves might do—would never start mills though other doves might start a thousand—but oh, if this mill could only be stopped! He made one more effort, tugged and strained to stop this crazy perversity in operation and called a mill. Stop? It was going faster, with renewed energy, with increased vitality. Such a jolly old mill!

"Ho! ho!" the old man below seemed to shout, "so fine to have no grist to grind!" That jolly old mill! That enthusiasm of old age! Talk about the zeal of a youthful mill! It is nothing compared with the ferocious fury of that old ark at Sandy Creek! Such a lively piece of machinery that now was running! "Booh—booh—gurr—gurr—roar—r—r!"

And that miserable little dove hopped about in a useless terror. If he got on top the big millstone which he could see, and if he sat down on it, wouldn't that stop it? This last resort of a brain fast growing wild, he was frantically considering, when he saw a shadow

approaching the open door, a shadow hastily nearing the mill, as if some one were running! Then the dove nimbly fluttered up the corner stairway into the empty loft.

"I'll hide," he said.

"Who—who—started this?" shouted Phil Tolman, rushing into the mill. He saw the tip of something disappearing at the top of the stairway.

"A rat?" he wondered.

He deferred an investigation until he had filled the hopper with corn, philosophically reflecting, "Somebody has saved me the trouble of starting this thing."

"Well, well," soon said a second voice, "so you've started again!"

"I didn't start it, Uncle Boardman."

"Who did then?"

"Don't know! I am going up those stairs to see."

Together, they went up the dusty, creaking stairs, Uncle Boardman carrying a lantern with which, as he said, "to poke into dark corners."

"Nothing but rats here!" said Phil.

"I dare say, Phil—and—" here he swung the light of his lantern into a black nook—"and I see one now—here—here!"

Yes, poor Tony was there, crouching away.

One lantern and two faces Tony saw when looking timorously up.

"I—I—didn't start her—I tried to stop her —and I couldn't," he blubbered.

"Oh, well, sonny," said Uncle Boardman soothingly, "don't you worry! I guess I know who started it. Now we will go down."

Tony followed the two detectives and the lantern down stairs.

"Bill Hawkins, wasn't it? I know it was Bill. He has been up to snuff all round to-day," said Uncle Boardman.

"I tried to stop it," moaned Tony.

"But couldn't?"

Tony shook his head.

"You remember what we said, Tony, about starting things up and not being able to stop them?"

Tony's head went up and down positively, like a hollyhock stem bobbing in the wind.

"You see now how it is, Tony?"

"Yes, and I won't start anything if hard to stop. I won't smoke or chew——"

There was a pause.

"No, never!" yelled Tony, breaking out again.

Uncle Boardman smiled, patted him on the head, said "good boy" and moved away.

Tony was left alone with Phil.

"I'll help you all I can," said Tony.

"And we will help one another. I will help you keep your promise. I won't chew nor smoke," declared Phil.

"What can I do, Phil?"

"Let me see! You may hold these bags for me."

"Anything else?"

"Yes, thank you! You may sweep the floor."

"Anything else? I'll do it, Phil."

"Let me think! Oh—there is something—not here—I wish you'd do. You'll have a nice picture-paper on Sunday, sing—and I'll be there too—and how would you like to go to Sunday-school at the Hall?"

"I'll go, Phil."

"Good! And to the meetings too before the school—real nice?"

"Yes, I will, Phil."

"You're a fine boy, Tony."

There was a very happy dove now in the mill.

Aunt Lyddy heard of the above through Kitty, who told her that Phil had got his "one."

Aunt Lyddy sat thinking the whole subject over as she darned a large stocking that only

Boardman's foot could fill. She reflected: "Tony found at the mill and goin' to Sunday-school! Good comin' out of evil, I call that. Now I must get my 'one' for the Hall. I promised one and that's the way to fill up, everybody git one. Now May Elliott is a-comin' home to-night. She ought to be secured for the Hall. Mr. Eaton needs her help. Them two young people will suit one another to a T, I know. Jest a pair! How shall I fix it? If I don't look out, she'll start off in the mornin'—to-morrow is Sunday—for St. John's, yes, sure, and there they'll hold on to her, and she is needed to hum at the Hall. She's been in Europe and don't know what is goin' on here. How shall I fix it?"

She saw Phil Tolman approaching the house.

"I have it now," she said, thrusting her needle into the big stocking-heel and halting in the work.

"Will you help me git somebody for the Hall?" she asked when Phil appeared.

"Oh, yes, Aunt Lyddy."

"May Elliott comes home to-night. She has been away so much she does not know what is a-goin' on, but you tell her when the

stage comes in, that Lyddy Boardman sends her love and is glad she's got home and wants to know if she won't come to the Hall tomorrer. You can tell her why."

"I will, Aunt Lyddy."

Soon after May Elliott had been brought to her home by the village stage of faded yellow, a boy wanted to see her at the door.

"Lyddy Boardman sends her love and is glad you've got home and wants to know if you won't come to the Hall, Sunday, to the services. You see we've started and Rev. Mr. Eaton is there——"

"Mr. Eaton?"

"Ripley Eaton."

May Elliott's bright blue eyes that looked so trusty and sincere, suddenly shone brighter, and they opened wider like a four o'clock blossom feeling the touch of the light.

"I know him," she murmured. "What time will the service be?"

"Half-past ten."

"I will be there."

CHAPTER XVII.

IN PORT.

"TINKUM! Tinkum!"

"What say, Toby?"

Tinkham True was planing at a bench in his little shop. This carpenter-coop had a circular front, was painted the color of a pumpkin, and looked like a pumpkin on the edge of the road and ripening in the sun. It had a very cheerful look. It faced the south and was always sure to catch up and hold a lot of sunshine.

Tinkham looked up when addressed.

Tobias Tolman as he accosted his old friend, was stumping energetically into the shop, almost breathless, tears filling his aged eyes.

"You 'member, Tinkum, when Parson Mason preached about 'Gittin' in Port'?"

Tinkham stroked his bald poll but could not coax up a single memory.

"You forgit, Tinkum?" asked Tobias, in surprise and in a tone of complacency because he had a memory so superior to Tinkham's. "A master sermon!"

"Oh, wall, it may come to me. Parson Mason always preaches a 'master sermon.' Where a man is so good, you can't expect to hold on to 'em all. Ky—ky—there, Tobias! Look out! That seat is much too high for you! Take this cheer!" urged Tinkham, glad to remind Tobias that he was short and adapted to low chairs.

Tobias was humble enough now. In his pride, he had strayed from the thought of his sorrow, that bitter fount, but he was back there again, and the tears were running.

"Oh, I was a-going to say that Parson Mason says while vessels may git into port, we must sometimes go and fetch 'em in, yes, fetch 'em in—his very words—and my Steve is one of them kind."

Tobias' tears were coming in a freshet.

"Oh, don't give up to it, Toby!" said the kind-hearted Tinkham. "And it's 'bout Steve! Too bad, too bad!"

To himself, Tinkham remarked, "How much Toby thinks of Steve! Loves that big feller yit like a boy!"

"Wall, Toby, to come to facts, you know—facts——"

Tinkham prided himself on his practical sense. He looked upon Tobias as a "leetle

visionary," having a "leetle too much sentiment," and he would often "brace up" Tobias.

"Facts, you know, we want, Toby. Sentiment is well enough in its place, but take things as they are. What good will anything else do? Brace up!"

"Oh, that brings me to it——"

"I thought 'twould, Toby, I thought 'twould."

"I was a-goin' to say, the min'ster, Eaton, came to my house and says he—he didn't want to worry me but—he had a letter from his sister. You know she taught our school—you 'member——"

"Oh, yes! Oh, yes! Of course!

"Wall, she has been a-married to Boardman Blake's nephew, Walter Plympton, and he's gone a doctorin' in Drewbury. He's real smart but has to begin kind of low, you know, and they made him town-physician. Wall, Eaton says his sister was out a-tryin' to help some of her husband's poor patients, and in a kind of hospittle she found a sick man a-lyin' on his bed—and purty well gone—she thinks ——"

The eyes generally so ashy in color were now red as live embers.

"Toby, brace up, brace up! Facts now, old boy!" cried Tinkham, trying to hold the tearful Tobias to the real point of his story.

"Why," said Tobias, breaking down in successive floods of tears, "she thinks it's Steve—s'pected he belonged here in town from that lock of hair he wears on his forehead you know—she saw a man wearin' his hair that way and met him in the road when she was a-comin' here—and when she axed him, he told everything and said he's my Steve. You know he went to sea and was 'way a long time, and has jest got in port. Oh, what a-gittin' in port! We—must—help—fetch him—in."

Here the tears fell in a rain, and Tobias' big, bushy head shook like a forest-top in a gale of wind.

"I see," said Tinkham, trying to hide his own tears and pulling out his handkerchief, pretending that he had been seized with a sudden fit of coughing and sneezing. "Wall, Toby, facts now, facts! Brace up, old boy! What do you think of a-doin'?"

"Wall, Drewb'ry you know is about eight miles from here—we call it—and I've 'gaged Boardman Blake's team, his covered waggin, to start right off and I thought you and me might go; Kitty and Phil went to the Centre

this mornin'. I won't wait for 'em but come for 'em to-morrer afore—afore Steve—d—d—dies——"

"Oh, he won't—choo—choo!"

Here Tinkham had another violent fit of coughing and sneezing.

This gale having spent its force, Tinkham told Tobias he would stand by him and go with him to Drewbury or anywhere else, Tinkham's practical sense telling him this was the proper thing to do since "Toby was so 'motional."

Two old men were soon riding toward Drewbury to see a vessel said to have arrived in port, weather-beaten and wave-battered. People saw the friends finally riding through the poorer streets of Drewbury inquiring for the "hospittle."

"What?" said an old woman at a street-corner. "A what, sir?"

"Haven't you a place where poor folks are taken care of without 'spense? That—that is what it 'mounts to," explained Tobias.

"Oh, the almshouse?"

"Not that," said Tobias.

"Toby," whispered the practical Tinkham, "you let me take the hellum."

"Madame," he said in a loud, ostentatious

voice, "haven't you a public institootion——a——"

"Oh, yes, you mean that big brick building on the hill," and she pointed out an imposing structure.

"That's it!" declared Tinkham, rejoicing in his good practical sense which had so successfully come to Tobias' rescue. "It is the very thing I want." Arriving at the brick building and leaving Tobias in the wagon, Tinkham passed through a gate into an office just inside.

"Good-day, sir," said Tinkham, to a clerk behind a railing. "Have you a friend—I mean —can take in a friend—take—er—er——"

"Do you mean, sir," said the clerk in a curt, business-like tone, "do you mean you have a friend you want to commit? I'm in a hurry, just be quick. Who's insane? Commit whom?"

"Insane? What do you take me for? *Com*mit? What for? I want a *per*mit if that's what you're up to," said Tinkham, nettled and bent on dispatching business as promptly as the other man.

"This," said the clerk speaking slowly, sharply, "this is the insane asylum—and if you have—a man out there to commit, you must go through—certain forms. We don't dump

insane-folks as if so—so much gravel inside the premises, but there must be an examination."

"Wall, who asked you to take an insane person?" roared Tinkham. "I didn't ax ye. I want to find a hospittle—a place for the sick —if there is one in this old town."

"This, sir, is—an—insane—asylum—I told you," said the clerk precisely and bowing him away.

"Exackly! The name and your actions correspond. I wouldn't leave a codfish here," shouted Tinkham, hurrying away in wrath. "You might treat folks decent."

"I think you are a candidate for admission," the clerk now roared at him, but he did not hear it.

When Tinkham reached the old market-wagon, Tobias was not there!

A horrible thought flashed through Tinkham's mind. Had Tobias been "committed" while he was wasting all that precious time inside the office? The clerk within was mean enough to have done it, thought Tinkham.

"I'll have justice, yes," insisted Tinkham, shaking his head. "I'll report to that policeman comin'. That's what policemen are for."

Tinkham confronted the man in blue.

"You seen a man get out of that wagon——"

He was about to detail his fears of a "committal" when he was happily interrupted by the officer.

"Yes, sir. He wanted me to tell you he had gone to hunt up the hospital, and I found he meant that one over—there—by that church what takes care of it, St. Luke's."

The policeman's stout arm pointed out the way, and the smiling, grateful Tinkham took it.

"Up that flight of stairs, please," the young lady in a lower waiting-room courteously told Tinkham. "An attendant, you will see, and she will tell you where to find your friend and the other man, Stephen Tolman, that you want to see."

"Thank-ee, thank-ee!" said the grateful Tinkham. "I wish all the folks that run institootions could go to school to ye. Nothin' like a bland, easy way of doin' things."

The young lady smiled, bowed her head, and Tinkham gratefully climbed the stairs.

The late arrival in port was lying on his bed in a neat, quiet little ward. He was listening to the murmur of the wind in a black-throated chimney, on whose hearth slowly burned a wood fire.

"Makes me think of the sea," he told himself as he closed his eyes and dreamed.

He thought he was on the deck of a vessel that tempest-scourged was trying to make a harbor.

"There's the light at Seal's Head," he murmured.

The lighthouse was passed and before him opened a hospitable port that meant home. But the wind and the rain and the dark! Would Steve Tolman get into harbor? Suddenly, out of the shadows, broke his father's gentle, pitying face bending toward him.

"My boy, my boy!" sobbed Tobias, getting down as well as he could beside the bed and reaching his arm around the white, wasted neck. Yes, Steve Tolman was getting into harbor.

This was the scene Tinkham witnessed when he stepped into the ward. He halted. He raised his old black hat.

"Felt jest as if I was a-goin' into a church," he afterwards said when detailing the story.

CHAPTER XVIII.

THE HOSPITAL.

KITTY Tolman was singing as she sat alone in Aunt Lyddy's shop. She had a voice of peculiar power, not so much because it was strong or melodious, but in singing she had the gift that people credited her with when she conversed. She could express thought. So she sang about the sea and a mother and her baby waiting for the father's return from a western sea.

More than a year had passed since Kitty met a person on the beach whose influence had so affected her life. She had grown physically, mentally, spiritually in the meantime. She could measure the first growth. The second, the third, others noticed; she did not know so much about these. She only knew she had changed. It was all there, whether measured or unmeasured. She was still growing. She was making progress in her studies, for she was still at work along the line of her books.

Phil also was studying, and he recited to Kitty. Then they all were doing very well in their daily business. Kitty was earning, Phil was earning, gran'sir was earning. They were living better and enjoying more. Kitty's father, she assured herself, was away somewhere on the sea. Was it not just as well, even better, because he was there? He was away from temptation. Think of him at home yielding to solicitation, staggering across the lines of advance she and Phil were making! What a hinderance! Just as well that he should be away, much better, while the father in the song had better return to his wife and baby. Kitty sometimes asked herself in moments of pride if that strange young man, coming again, would not see a change in her? Had not the distance between them lessened? If she kept on making the most of herself, might she not hope sometime to walk abreast of his place in the world's column? She was in this complacent mood to-day. Satisfied to have her parent away, singing plaintively of the mother and baby in that home whose father was off on the tumbling billows, suddenly she was interrupted by Tinkham, who thrusting his head in the doorway, called out:

"Kitty, your father is over to Drewbr'y and he wants to see ye, and Phil too! Be spry and git ready. I came back on purpose for ye. I've got another team and we will go over this afternoon."

It seemed to Kitty as if walking on a high, proud sweep of land, suddenly she had been dropped to a low walk, down by the rough ocean. The wind in the song blowing from a western sea had changed to a very cross one from the northeast. The baby was dead, and the mother in black was mourning.

"What did you say?" asked Kitty, springing up from her chair. "Father, father back?"

"Over to Drewb'ry in a hospittle. But git Lyddy to tend shop, and you git your things ready, while I hunt up Phil at the mill. Be spry."

"Is—is—he very sick?" she asked, following Tinkham out into the road.

"Should say he was, but be spry."

This second team was soon packed and Tinkham was clucking to the old horse headed for Drewbury. Kitty had many questions to ask, but the garrulous Tinkham's tongue running on like an eight-day clock spared her many inquiries. Phil sat with Kitty on the back seat. Even an eight-day clock will run

down and Tinkham was finally silent. Then Phil and Kitty could talk with one another.

"Father is pretty sick, Kitty," said Phil.

"I know it."

"I suppose he has had a hard time, Kitty."

"I don't doubt it."

Tinkham could not stay still a long time and his cracked voice was now heard singing. This seemed very natural as he had joined the choir at the Hall and was proud of the fact. He sang in a low tone and did not disturb Kitty and Phil.

"Tinkham says father may get well again and come home, Kitty. There is a chance for him."

"Yes, I know."

"Well, Kitty, I want to say this; we are doing well and if father comes home I hope he —he——"

Hark! Tinkham was singing this fragment from the previous Sunday's singing:

"To comfort and to bless
To find a balm for woe"—

His voice now sank to an indistinct murmur.

"I know what you mean, Phil. I hope he will do well if he should get well and come home. If he should come, why—I have been

thinking it over—it may make it harder for the rest, but he ought to have a chance to make the most of himself—our motto—you know—and I will do what I can."

That was said like a woman, great in her kingdom of love, and Kitty was showing that she too was a queen there.

Tinkham's attenuated strains began to rise and swell:

"The captive to release,
To God the lost to bring,
To teach the way of life and peace,
It is a Christ-like thing."

Kitty felt the pressure of Phil's hand on her arm.

"That is it, Kitty. You're right, and I will help."

"Good boy!" rejoined Kitty.

She had been expecting it. Phil's soul was not a garden that grew only weeds. Tinkham was now piping up louder:

"And we believe Thy word,
Though dim our faith may be.
What e'er for thine we do, O Lord,
We do it unto Thee!"

The angel Charity was riding in that wagon,

sometimes on the front seat holding the reins and then on the back seat where Kitty and Phil were.

The road to Drewbury wound along the shore. A strong east wind blew from the water. Heavy squadrons of fog came sailing in and seemed to anchor about the wagon, so that while it was continually moving, it did not get away from this fleet of mist-ships. As the travellers neared Drewbury, the road that had been uneven and rough, steadily improved. The houses multiplied and, looming up in the fog, seemed to come suddenly upon the travellers, but with a friendly air as if to welcome them. The country road changed to a paved street, and over the stones Tinkham's team noisily clattered.

"There 'tis! There's the hospittle!" exclaimed Tinkham, pointing out a plain and not spacious building. "'Tain't a big hospittle but it teaches a big lesson and shows well for the church what got it up. If I was a hoary-headed infidel——" his hand went up to his smooth, bare top—"which I be not—but if I was, it would bring me round to believin'. Nothin' like char-i-ty! Whoa there!"

He jumped down from his seat, and Kitty and Phil also dismounted, and then all climbed

the hospital stairs. The face that Kitty last saw at a window of her home, was now looking up white and thin from a hospital bed. Gran'-sir sat beside it, patiently watching. Kitty stepped forward and kissed her father.

"You—you don't want to kiss me," he murmured, while the tears flowed.

"Yes, I do, father, and here is Phil."

Phil was very sympathetic and had his deep feelings on this occasion, but he felt that he could not be anything else than an awkward boy, and how he wished he were a demonstrative girl like Kitty!

"How-dy-do, father?" he said.

The answer was another burst of tears.

"Oh, I wouldn't, father! Now try—to be quiet," encouragingly urged Kitty.

With her handkerchief she wiped away his tears, while gran'sir silently wiped away his own flow.

"Kitty was a good nurse always. Wish I could do something!" thought Phil, looking at his unoccupied and useless hands. "Ain't Kitty a help!"

Our faces are looking-glasses in which the soul is reflected, and the sick man saw in Phil's face an honest pity, also the desire to help, while he stood a boy in a bewildering kind of

helplessness, his awkward hands in his pockets now. It touched the patient, even more than did Kitty's ready and dexterous aid. The tears gushed out of his eyes.

"Now young folks, Kitty and Phil," said a sympathetic voice in a kind of business-like, official tone, "perhaps you'd better go down stairs and wait there until your team starts. Gran'sir might wait here. I think your father is going to get well and you will see him again. And, Kitty, my wife would like to see you."

It was Dr. Walter Plympton.

"Good-bye, father! We will be glad to see you at home," said Phil, awkwardly but cordially, holding out one hand while the other was drawn across his eyes.

"Thankee, Phil! You're a good boy!" said his father.

"N—no—I—ain't!" said Phil, blubbering.

How Phil did wish he could stoop down as nimbly as Kitty the next moment, kiss his father and then pat his forehead with a gentle hand! Kitty had forgotten though to say anything about her pleasure in seeing her father at home once more. It was simple forgetfulness, nothing more.

The sick man closed his eyes and sank into

a deep thoughtfulness. He was wondering why God had ever permitted such an ingrate to live, why God had not given him children like himself, children with an appetite stronger than their wills, and why God had permitted him to have a praying father all these years.

"I don't doubt," thought the patient, "that my father is prayin' for me now. Sittin' in his chair, he is thinkin' about me."

He pulled the sheet over his face that nobody might see him cry.

Suddenly a soft step approached his bed, and in gentle, pitying tones a voice said, "I came back to say, father, that I forgot to tell you that I shall be real glad to see you home, and I—I—pray for you, and you pray, won't you?"

The sheet trembled as if an earthquake were shaking it and Kitty stole away.

In a room below, the doctor's wife was waiting. It was Kitty's old teacher and her welcome was as cordial and enthusiastic as ever.

"My Kitty!" she said warmly, kissing her repeatedly.

But who was with Mrs. Plympton? To whom was she introducing Kitty? "And now Miss Parmenter, let me introduce to you somebody *I* think very much of, an old scholar, Miss Kitty Tolman."

The latter saw somebody staring coldly at her but not advancing. Kitty had stepped forward, holding out her hand. She now halted.

Was Kitty confronting an iceberg?

She saw a rather stout, handsome young woman. Her eyes were dark and cold. Her whole face had a frozen look, and Kitty soon found she could also give freezing looks. She slightly nodded her head but her lips were set as two slabs of ice.

"I'm glad to see you," the impulsive Kitty was about to say, but a cold wave from the iceberg froze this sentence off, even at the first word.

"I'm——" said Kitty and stopped.

"I'm—what?" said Miss Iceberg, suddenly and noisily breaking out, but how sarcastically. She laughed an impudent laugh.

Kitty was very quick at a reply and could be very saucy. She had been trying though to restrain the old impetuous self.

She controlled herself now and said pleasantly, "I'm—Kitty Tolman, and I was going to say I'm glad to see you."

"Oh!" remarked Miss Iceberg, in a tone of disappointment, for she expected to see Kitty mad and confused. She turned about and

walked into an adjoining room, coolly saying as she moved away, "Come, Mrs. Doctor, I must be going now."

She paid no farewell-attention to Kitty. Kitty had her reward from her old teacher.

"Kitty, you are a darling to behave so generously. I want to kiss you twice before I go."

Then she whispered to Kitty, "You must not mind Miss Parmenter. It is her way. She is engaged to a cousin of mine—I—I am sorry to say."

"Oh, I don't care. I—I'd do anything for you, dear Mrs. Plympton. You are going? Well, I'll go too."

When her teacher had left, she started to leave. "Must I go out of the door that saucy woman took and meet her again? No, I'll try another door," thought Kitty.

The second door was locked and the key gone!

"Then I'll wait. That woman will go soon." Kitty sat down. Suddenly, she heard voices in the adjoining room. She was forced to listen, willingly or unwillingly.

"Most ready, Katharine?" asked Miss Parmenter.

"Yes."

"*That* girl gone?"

"She was going and probably went out of the other door, the front one."

"It is my opinion she will always go out of front doors. I don't like her."

A chill struck Kitty.

"I *do* like her," Mrs Plympton said.

Kitty's ears now began to burn.

"I do like her. She's a girl——"

"Oh, I don't want to hear about her, but what are you waiting for?"

"Waiting for cousin. Don't you want to see Atwood?"

"Atwood?" thought Kitty.

"Ha-ha!" coldly laughed Miss Parmenter. "Ha-ha! I can get along without your cousin Atwood to-day. It won't do to let these men think they are of too much importance, and I advise you to begin with the doctor in good season—ha—ha!"

A third voice was now heard: "Well, ladies, if you are ready to go, had we not better be moving?"

"Don't be so impatient!" advised Miss Parmenter.

"Oh, Cousin Atwood is not impatient, but the opposite," said Mrs. Plympton.

"I don't want to hurry you, ladies, but there

is another hospital to be visited. The world's full of people, who either don't have a good chance in life, or what they have, they don't improve."

"What!" thought Kitty, springing up from her chair. "Cousin Atwood—it can't be! Yes, it is his voice!"

The tone carried Kitty away to a boat on the sea, and this same voice was speaking to her as she rowed away.

"He—engaged to that woman?" wondered Kitty. "He—the one?"

It seemed to her, standing on the floor of that room, as if hot plates of iron were beneath her; and they became hotter every moment, for Miss Parmenter was speaking again:

"Say, Mrs. Doctor Plympton, is the girl you think so fine, that you introduced to me, is she the daughter of *that man* up stairs?"

"The same," replied the doctor's wife.

"What man?" asked Cousin Atwood.

"Oh, his name is Stephen Tolman. His family lives in the neighborhood where I taught school, you know, cousin."

"He knows, Atwood knows!" remarked Miss Parmenter, sarcastically. "He thinks the place very picturesque, and says a young

woman—or big girl, rowed him about, and she had a fine stroke. Some young fishwoman!"

How hot were the iron plates now! Kitty felt that she was burning up.

"She is not to be made fun of, ladies. She was a very interesting picture. I can see her now, so strong, so animated——"

"Atwood!" warned Miss Parmenter.

"Well, it was just so. I shall always see that face. Her very presence gave me strength. I was so much of a sick man——"

"Atwood Gilmore! I should think you were sick now. I am tired and 'sick' too of this, and I shan't stop to hear this nonsense."

Kitty leaned against a wall, so weak did she feel. Such conflicting emotions had met and were struggling within her!

"Ho, Miss Parmenter, are you going?" called out another voice, prompt and energetic. "Hold on! Let me get my hat and I will go with you!"

Dr. Plympton stepped aside to find his hat, and quickly returning, accompanied the party out doors. Peeping out of the room in which she had been on fire like a martyr tied to the stake, Kitty saw that there was a clear egress and she escaped promptly. She was quickly in the street.

"Now I can breathe! Oh, if I am not glad to be out of that! Ah, there is Tinkham waiting for me opposite! Won't I be glad to get into that wagon!"

She found Phil and gran'sir with Tinkham. Climbing into the wagon, she took the back seat with Phil, and then Tinkham called out to his horse, "Git up there!"

On the other side of the street, Dr. Plympton and Miss Parmenter were walking ahead. Mrs. Plympton followed with her cousin. Mrs. Plympton's eyes were quick and she had seen Kitty.

"Cousin," she said, "does that girl getting into that wagon look like the girl you met on the beach at the Harbor? Quick, look!"

"I guess not, for my heroine wore a boy's cap and was bare-footed. I'd run a mile to see her if I thought it were she. What is the girl's name? But that won't do any good. I shall have to go to the Harbor myself and hunt her up."

"I wish you would," thought the doctor's wife as the two walked on in silence, "or hunt up somebody different from Miss Parmenter. How my cousin became interested in this woman, I don't see—and yet I do see. When she wills, Miss Parmenter can be as very agree-

able as she has been disagreeable to-day. The trouble was that Atwood did not see her in the second mood, only in the first, and knowing her partially, became engaged to her. She knew him though, and knew that he had money and that was enough for her. But he has found her out now, and knows too late that her beauty is only a veil—but I won't be too harsh. What is it Atwood is saying to me?"

She answered him and then resumed this interesting reflection: "I see that Miss Parmenter opposes him whenever he speaks of studying for the ministry. I hope he will stick to his purpose, for it is not a hasty one, and that he will not let this perverse, wilful—but there, I ought not to run on so. Talk about that young fishwoman! How Miss Parmenter sneered at her! I wish Cousin Atwood would marry one of those girls with their honesty and bravery, rather than Miss Parmenter. Now I think somebody ought to hunt up that mysterious heroine that so interested cousin."

All the time, the "mysterious heroine" was an occupant of the back seat of that covered wagon on its way to the Harbor. Phil was not inclined to talk, but Tinkham and gran'sir on the front seat were busily entertaining one another. A dismal, heavily beating rain had

set in, and Kitty was glad of it. She leaned against a corner of the wagon-top, pulled her shawl high above her face and had the companionship of her own meditations. "To think *he* should be engaged to *her*," sighed Kitty. "Oh dear! Too bad for him!"

She sighed again,

This sigh was for Kitty.

CHAPTER XIX.

THAT GREAT HIGH TIDE.

IT was autumn.

The land was looking rusty.

There were signs of withering and dying in all the fields. The sea though gave no sign of any loss of vigor. That was getting up a storm. The signs of this multiplied. It is true that reluctant testimony was given by a few vanes which had an iron-rust rheumatism in their joints, but even these moved at last, and said, "Look out for a nor-reaster!"

As for the versatile trumpet-vane on the Hall, the alert crow-biddy on Farmer Hawkins' yellow stable, that reliable old ox on Boardman Blake's red barn, all these promptly said, "Look out, or you'll catch it!" Then the clouds were of a deeper, leaden hue, and they had a swollen look as if they were immense water-casks rolling into position, their heads to be broken in any moment.

The sea too was turbulent. Many waves

had put on "night-caps" as if to deceive the unwary mariner and make him think they were going to sleep, when they meant the most wide-awake business and purposed to accomplish all the mischief possible between "Seal's Head" at the left of the harbor entrance and "Solomon's Pint" at the right.

"And, Kitty," called Philip, returning from the mill, "the tide has been running awful high and—I think, Kitty, I'd better go up and have a talk with Boardman."

"What for?"

"I don't feel easy about the mill."

"Afraid it will go?"

"Yes."

"Find out what the owner says. He is the one to be alarmed."

"Oh, well, you know I am the one to look after things. I'll just step up to Uncle Boardman's." Off he went.

"Ha-ha!" laughed Boardman Blake when Phil had made his report and started for home. "That boy interests me, Lyddy."

"What boy?"

"Phil. There I was, chopping wood out at the old block in the shed and he came up and looked into my face—you know what a long, steady look he can give——"

"Yes."

"—and he said 'I'm anxious about—about the mill, Uncle Boardman.' 'Yes', I told him, 'I suppose it is pretty weak and I know the tide is running high and I see the storm has set in and it is raining. What can we do about it, Phil?' 'I don't know,' he says. 'That is what worries me. I—I'll watch it and let you know and do all I can.' 'Oh, I guess she'll pull through,' I told him."

"I am afraid, Boardman, she will pull out to sea," said Lyddy.

"I don't know as we can stop it if it really wants to go, Lyddy."

"No rope will hold it. Phil's care is as good a rope as it can have. See that boy!"

The two old people, side by side, looked after Phil's retreating form out in the road until the rain and the mist hid him.

"I tell you, Lyddy, I am more and more persuaded that one of the best things we can do for anybody is to give 'em something to do. It brings them out, shows what is in them, and helps make them. Now, Phil did not seem to amount to much before, but this taking care of the mill, getting interested in the machinery which he seems to fancy, has brought him right out and he ain't a cypher."

"Not by any means," declared Lyddy.

That evening, the storm was raging in all its fury. The next day, Sunday, there was a savage tumult all up and down the shore. Back at Sandy Creek—but where was Sandy Creek? As far as the eye could see, there was only a wide expanse of angry-looking water, and out of it rose a gray old mill like some ancient craft that had come in from sea and anchored! Ah, what if this ancient craft broke away from its moorings and went off to sea again? Everybody feared this.

The mill strongly tempted one individual, Farmer Hawkins' Bill.

"Now I want to be able to say that I saw a tide when a boat could ride clean over the dam, yes, clean over, and my boat is a-goin' to do that ere thing," said Bill.

It did not trouble him to do unnecessary Sunday-work of any kind. For Bill, the day had no beautiful side of rest or worship.

His parents attended the Hall services.

"Won't you go to the Hall to-day?" pleaded his mother.

"No!" he growled.

He had made up his mind to row across the dam to the mill-pond. Of course, no sign of a dam could be seen beneath the surface of the

far-stretching water. The mill-platform too was buried. The water looked as if it would rise up and the mill looked as if it would go down and the water would come out on top of the mill. Bill rowed without difficulty to the very door of the mill.

"Guess," he said, chuckling away, "guess as how few ever did this thing before."

The door was locked, but he opened a window and climbed into the mill, that way.

"I've got here and made good my word!" he said proudly, but he had not thoroughly made fast his boat!

He strutted around the mill, tickled with the thought that since his recollection nobody had been inside the mill who had come across the dam in a boat!

"What, the things all gone?" he said, looking about him.

Yes, the careful Phil had anticipated trouble and securing help had removed Boardman's desk, the bags of corn and meal, and even the old arm-chair and what he called "the pilgrims' bench." Bill was not pleased with the situation at the mill. He coveted an opportunity to do mischief. There was nothing movable he could lay his hands on. Was there not a single thing he could do?

Chancing to cast a glance up the stairway in the corner, he saw in the dusky light something hanging down by the wall.

"Oh, those clothes—ha-ha! Might do something with them!" declared Bill.

Up the stairs he rushed and laid greedy hands on the clothing Boardman Blake had left for shipwrecked mariners that might reach the mill.

"Phil," said Boardman Blake when discussing the removal of movable goods, "the very, very last moment, somebody may come."

And to think that in a possibly last moment —for the mill at least—Bill Hawkins should come! How Boardman Blake's serene, pacific breast would have swelled with a just emotion, and what a discharge of indignation there would have been, if he had seen Bill Hawkins bearing those precious old goods down stairs!

"Ha-ha!" chuckled Bill. "These were 'designed'—that's the word I heard Boardman use one day—'designed for shipwrecked sailors.' And here's a shipwrecked sailor! I'm the very feller. I tell you what I'll do with you," he continued, addressing the clothes, "I'll rig up something that will scare the life out of that upstart Phil Tolman when he comes again!"

Over the top of the post, he threw a long shaggy overcoat, and beneath it, he arranged a pair of pants, so that any person entering the mill saw not the post but a rough, headless tramp!

"Oh, it must have a hat! What would be the effect if I had one and put it on this 'ere scarecrow?" said Bill. "Let me try mine!"

The effect of a hat was so striking that Bill danced in ecstasy about the scarecrow. Could one have seen the hatless Bill, his low, retreating brow and prominent, hooked nose suggesting so vividly a hawk's profile, one would have questioned whether the effect of the change was greater in the case of the head of the post or the head of Bill.

The hawk stopped his fluttering.

"Oh, let me think! There is an old felt hat I used for baling and that I stuck in the stern of my boat. I'll get that and leave it here to scare Phil."

He ran to the window he had entered and looked out. Such a horrified look the hawk gave! His property had worked itself loose, so uneasy was the water, and a hundred feet from the mill the boat was mockingly drifting away.

CHAPTER XX.

AN ODD SHIP LAUNCHED.

WHILE Bill was at the mill, the usual service at the Hall was in progress. It was a stormy day attendance, but does the place of prayer ever seem more like a retreat and a dear shelter than on stormy Sundays? The choir was on hand in full force, and Tinkham True and Tobias Tolman as usual backed it up with their abundant if not melodious bass.

These two worthies would sing side by side in the time of praise, kneel side by side in the time of prayer, and when the clergyman began his sermon, they seemed to have entire confidence in his sincerity and orthodoxy, and would drop into a profound slumber, their heads rising and falling, like successive waves on Slumber's Atlantic-like deep.

In the little congregation, was Stephen Tolman. It was a great comfort to Tobias Tolman to see "his Steve" at the Hall in "meetin'-time." When he left his sick bed at the

hospital, he left his old method of life behind him, and he went out holding one hand up to God, and with the other hand he manfully fought his way against temptation. At his side sat trusty Phil Tolman, but Kitty's loving face was in the choir. Boardman and Lydia Blake were at the Hall, also Farmer Hawkins' family save Bill. The latter brought a great grief to very worthy parents.

While the services all were simple and humble, they were hearty and comforting. The young clergyman's sermon was upon "The Storms of Life," and every point he made was impressively emphasized by the moan of the wind at the door and the heavy beat of the rain on the windows.

Before the last hymn was sung he said, "When I was coming to the Hall, I looked on the river, the creek, and then tried to look out to sea. The mist dropped its folds too low to let me see any distance. What a storm is now raging! It makes a picture to illustrate the sermon. Just as this hall has received and sheltered us, so our faith in Christ offers us a hiding-place when earth's storms sweep over the soul. Let us appreciate all this as we sing our last hymn,

"From every stormy wind that blows,
From every swelling tide of woes,
There is a calm, a sure retreat;
'Tis found beneath the mercy-seat."

May Elliott played the organ and she made it breathe out the thought in the hymn as if a human soul were within and voiced itself in the organ notes.

Like the many vessels that before the storm had been hurrying past Seal's Head, eagerly seeking harbor, so in that last hymn did many of those in the Hall hasten away to the Saviour and find refuge in His bosom. The service was over but the people lingered. There was an instinctive aversion to any exposure to the autumn storm, and a clinging to the warm shelter of the Hall.

"Glad to see you out, so many of you," said Boardman Blake to the Hawkins group.

"Thank you!" replied Farmer Hawkins, a man whose face showed energy and trust.

"All here but Bill," sorrowfully commented gray-haired Mrs. Hawkins.

Suddenly the door was thrown open. "Mill a-goin'!" shrieked a voice.

It was Tony Watkins, for whom that day, the weather had greater fascinations than the services.

A QUICK EMBARKATION.

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TILDEN FOUNDATIONS
R L

How the people scattered!

Phil flew after Tony, and the two boys crossing the street, took a path that quickly led them to Sandy Creek. The path brought them so far down the creek that the mill was in plain sight.

"What is that, Phil?" asked Tony.

"Where?"

"In the winder? Why, Phil, it is somebody wavin' something!"

"So it is, Tony! Where's a boat?"

"There's father's boat. We can take that."

There followed a quick running for the boat of Tony's father, a quick embarkation, and then came a stout pulling for the mill.

The "somebody wavin' something" was Bill Hawkins at the mill-window. When he saw his boat adrift, there was a tumult of fear within him. He was a coward, and besides he could not swim.

At first, he thought he would build a raft. He patiently lugged down from the loft a big quantity of boards that had not been nailed down but laid upon the beams, making a very loose and movable kind of floor. After he had toiled frantically at this job and accumulated a stout pile of material, it flashed upon him that he had neither hammer nor nails! "How

can I make a raft without them?" he asked himself.

"Oh, what a fool!" he exclaimed, walking about the heap. "I can do nothin'."

What was it he saw coming up through the floor? The tide abruptly rising, there was a sudden eruption of water into the mill, and what a drove of rats came with it! The water had entered their hiding-places and routed them. There they were, black and weird, scampering across the floor! One big fellow ran over Bill's foot. "Ugh, you beast!" was his welcome, drawing his foot back. Then the rats went racing up the stairway in the corner.

The thought came unbidden and would stay though unwelcomed, what if the mill were carried away, and swept out to sea, and the rats be his fellow-passengers—not passengers in good fellowship, but a horde of pirates threatening to attack him! Would he kill them or would they, the pirates, fall upon him and then eat him up, cannibals as well as pirates? The perspiration stood in cold drops upon his forehead.

What could be done? This was suggested though not hardly agreeable to his pride. He had manufactured a scare-crow to frighten Phil; now he himself, the scared one, proposed

to take that long overcoat and flourish it out of the window as a signal of distress.

He began to wave it.

Would any one see this signal of danger? What if he waved and kept waving, not attracting any notice!

But there was a boat coming!

Yes, it was heading for the mill!

His signal had been seen and help was coming! Who was coming? How nice if his father were in that boat! It would be like his patient, long-suffering father, to come.

"There's nobody in the boat big enough for father," he murmured. "One certainly is a small boy. Oh, can it be my brother Ammi and his boy, Fred?"

It would have been just like Ammi, a kind-hearted brother.

The boat was nearer now.

Bill gave a final flourish of the signal.

"Didn't work this thing for nothin'! Wanted, though, to scare Phil with it!" thought Bill.

Quickly the boat was under the window and Phil was there, talking in a cordial fashion, while the dove looked up into the face of the hawk.

"Bill, that you? We saw your signal. Just

jump in and make yourself to home," said Phil.

The hawk dropped into the boat, startled at the sight of his rescuer, and muttering a confused kind of thanks. Then he was rowed ashore.

It was expected that the mill would go to sea that very afternoon and Tony's announcement at the Hall, though not supported by facts, was not at all wondered at. Everybody said the mill would go, and what could an accommodating mill do but go to sea, and thereby prove every one making a prediction, to be a true prophet? In spite of the storm, groups of people under umbrellas or in modern water-proofs or ancient oil-suits, stood on the shore of the creek, watching the mill.

"There she goes!" cried a boy who wanted to be in season with his news.

"She" did not go.

There had been a severe strain brought to bear upon the lower timbers and the strain had not let up. Still, the old relic stood. There came another assault by the water. One corner was severely jarred and ruptured. From that point the agitation extended all over the building. It was like the spasm of death. Still the old building did not go.

There came another pressure from the tide. It lifted at every corner. It crowded harder and harder. The door shook. It seemed as if "the old man" below must be making one more effort to start up the mill. The windows rattled. The floor above trembled. The runner, that old, faithful millstone, began to turn!

Ah, it was a throe of death. The tide was pressing against the shaft of the turbine wheel, and as the shaft broke, the stone above was moved. Then it stopped. Power, vitality, was exhausted, and the helplessness of death set in. The old millstone did not revolve again, but with its companion sank in disgrace to the bottom of the harbor-bed, while a shattered old hull went floating off in the demon arms of the resistless tide. The rats thrust the tips of their sharp noses through odd cracks, and in places they worked their eyes outside. In those dark depths was there not a wonder at what had happened?

The happening was the launch of an odd craft on an angry sea, and with its uncanny four-footed crew it drifted away.

The mill at Sandy Creek had forever gone.

CHAPTER XXI.

A PRIZE, A PRIZE!

THINGS come along with surprising celerity sometimes.

One day, there was a number of happenings in the Tolman family. It all began in a boy's solitary thought, in his pluck and sense, his determination to do something and be somebody.

Many things start that way.

It was a boy who at first was idly resting his hands in his pockets.

"Pull them out," said a voice within. "Pockets were made for things, not for hands. They are bags, not loafing-places. Pull them out!"

"I will," said the boy, "and I'll do something with them."

Alone in the old kitchen where he had started a fire for the day—a boy's fitting work for the home in the morning—he had this reflection; "I miss the mill. I miss the going there during the day, and with my lantern at

night. I almost expect to hear it rumble any time. But what am I going to do next?"

He went to the window and looked out.

"I might go a-fishing, but I don't like that. I know I ought to go to school. That is what a boy needs, to know something, and now is my chance. I won't have it again—" He shook his head, and said, "Never—again, no, sir! I'm going to school."

The next happening was the talk of a boy with his father and then the father talked with gran'sir. The next step was one out of doors, for the father hurried off toward Boardman Blake's, and conferred with the young woman in the cozy little shop.

The next interview was between the father and Boardman, the father at last going away, murmuring gratefully, "Oh, I do hope I amount to something and can do something for my children," while Boardman turned back to his house and hunted up his partner, Lyddy Blake. She was in the kitchen, dressing a chicken for dinner.

"Well, Lyddy," said Boardman, smiling and nodding and rubbing his hands, "things are coming on fast. Who do you think has been here? Steve Tolman, and it is good to see how that man grows since he has quit drink-

ing and has asked God to help him. Well, you can never guess what is going on and I'll tell you——"

"Yes, I can," said Aunt Lyddy, turning her black eyes toward him suddenly, "Phil Tolman wants to go to the academy. He was up yesterday to ask if May Elliott was going to be assistant at the Drewbury Academy, and he said he'd like to go."

"You beat the Dutch or the Yankees on guessing, Lyddy. That is what it is, or part of it."

"If it's only part of it, then Kitty wants to go, and that's the rest of it, Boardman."

Boardman tipped his head back and laughed one of his easy, hearty laughs.

"You've pulled the most of the cat out of the bag, Lyddy, and now I'll help you get the rest out. Steve said that Phil wanted to go to Drewbury Academy, and had already started to walk there to see if he could not get a chance to do some work for his schooling—doing some chores about the building, or in town, either one."

"Gone already?"

"Yes, Phil is on the way there now. I would have taken him over, but his father said Phil wanted to start off and do what he could

himself. Boy is plucky! Now, I know something you could not guess. Steve found out yesterday he could have a chance at the life-saving station on our beach, and he thinks of going there and using his earnings to help Phil——"

"And Kitty? Gran'sir, too?"

"You wait, Lyddy. Things have been coming on fast, but I will tell you all in a jiffy. What do you think those two folks, Steve and gran'sir, have done? They have put their heads together, and while Steve goes to the life-saving station, gran'sir is going to Tinkham True's to board. You see Tinkham happened round there to-day and it has all been fixed, yes, fixed. Gran'sir will have a splendid chance to work in Tinkham's shop this winter, and says he can earn enough to pay his board at Tinkham's, and Kitty's at Drewbury. Steve thinks his savings will do something for Kitty."

All this time Aunt Lyddy was saying at intervals, "I see! Jes' so! Jes' so!"

"But—Steve wanted to tell us and see if it would be all right about taking Kitty away from here."

"I guess so!" said Aunt Lyddy, promptly. "We won't stand in the way of that child's futur'. We will help."

"And that's what I have been thinking," said Boardman, delighted to see his wife's manifest interest. "Now, I'll tend shop for you, Lyddy, and we'll make believe it's Kitty, and if you say so, let Kitty have the money."

"A grand idee! I'd like to have Boardman Blake for a clerk fus-rate, and, Boardman, why couldn't we do this? The children ought to have a home on Sunday, and if you'll go for 'em and fetch 'em, I'll do all I can to make 'em happy. This will save so much board in Drewbury, and they can help at the Hall too, on Sunday."

"Just like Lyddy Blake! Yes, we'll help 'em. I don't know but our chance at making much of ourselves is most over, but we can help others, help young folks and bring them on."

"That's it, Boardman! You've hit the nail on the head. Yes, I s'pose our time is most over."

The old lady one moment looked mournfully out of her spectacles. Then with sudden energy, she exclaimed; "No, our chance is not most over, Boardman, we're going to grow and make the most of ourselves, forever."

"Lyddy," said Boardman, solemnly, "you—you are right." After a pause, he added,

"Now, I'll step right into the shop and tell that dear child, Kitty, all alone there, how we feel about it and what we will do."

As a result of the above, Steve Tolman one day took Kitty and Phil in Boardman Blake's market-wagon to the "Male and Female Academy, Drewbury." It was a proud ride for Steve. To Kitty and Phil it was a ride to wonderland, to the purple tops of the mountains, to the end of the rainbow under which there is a pot of gold. They were like little children in their enthusiastic joy. Everything that happened, happened right. If a charge of dynamite even had been handed them on the way by Farmer Hawkins when they passed his house, it might have been counted a favor. It was not anything of the destructive kind, but constructive. It was a note for Phil, and it contained twenty dollars. It said—

"Dear Phil: Please take this to help along at Drewbury. Don't accept it as a gift, but as compensation for your handsome rescue of my boy from the mill. You earned it, and are welcome to it."

"That's a fine way of puttin' it," said Stephen Tolman.

"Phil deserves every bit of it," declared Kitty.

"But Kitty shall have half of it," insisted Phil.

"No, sir. I am going to be independent. You earned that, and I'm going to earn something at scrubbing. Yes, I can scrub."

The ride to wonderland, to the purple mountain-tops, to the end of the rainbow with its pot of gold, was finally over, and in a little while the principal of the academy had accepted the brother and sister as students. In a good school, apart from the advantage of any particular course of study there is always something that we feel most helpfully. It is that by the simple fact of membership we are lifted above life's ordinary level into an atmosphere of high hope, of great ambition, and this atmosphere goes with us into the future whenever we recall the old school-days. It is like bringing down into the valleys the stimulus of the pure air we once breathed on the high mountain-tops.

Kitty and Phil felt the new atmosphere at once. It invigorated them for effort.

"I'm going to study, Kitty, just as hard as I can."

"I am going to study, Phil, harder, if I can."

So precious was every moment! It was a vein of gold, it was a casket of diamonds, it was—beyond value.

May Elliott, the assistant, spoke approvingly of Kitty and Phil to all the teachers, and gave any extra personal help she could. Everything was hopeful. Everything was bright. The sun shone through the twenty-four hours. One day, across the sunshine, fell a shadow. It was the opening of the second week of school.

"Phil," asked Kitty, "didn't I see somebody from the Harbor at recess?"

"I am afraid you did. I saw him and spoke to him."

"Wasn't it Bill Hawkins?"

"Yes, every inch of him too. He didn't leave a bit of himself behind at the Harbor. He wanted to know about you. He said he'd give you and me too, a tussle about getting prizes."

"Prizes?"

"That's what he said. He has been here before and he seemed to know everything. He said they give prizes and he knew how to get one without working."

"I'd be ashamed of myself to take one unless I deserved it."

"Oh, it is his way of talking."

"Talking? It is his way of acting too when he has a chance. I don't mean to have any-

thing to do with him—that is, more than I can help, Phil."

"His father was good to me, Kitty."

"And you were good to his son, Phil. The father said the money wasn't a favor; he was only paying a debt. No, I don't think you can cultivate an acquaintance with Hawk's Bill safely. I will be civil to him, but I can't consent to anything more."

Bill did not like treatment that was simply civil. In return for civility simply, he showed in various ways how disagreeable he could be. Phil felt the hawk's ill humor. He soon found that among the boys he was known as "Grindstone," and Bill Hawkins was the one that most frequently turned this stone of offense.

"I say, Grindstone! Grindstone, I say!" Bill would shout to Phil.

If any boy standing near did not notice it, Bill would continue, "Grindstone! I say, *Grind*—STONE!"

When the attention of a third party had been secured and the third party began to grin, then Bill would proceed to finish his sentence.

Phil did not like it. He complained to Kitty.

"Do you know what they call you that for, Phil?"

"Oh, Bill says, because I'm grinding away all the time at my books. I told him as good as to stop it."

"What did he say?"

"'I can't stop myself,' with an ugly face too, and then he shouted—looking so disgusting—'Old Grindstone'! And then he got mad."

"Now, you see, Phil, at first it was 'Grindstone' and then 'Old Grindstone' and next —next——"

"Next time it will be 'Very Old Grindstone'!"

"I dare say, and my advice is, Phil, not to mind it but let him know you think it is a compliment."

"How?"

"Oh, he will be likely to want you to do something and you may or may not be able to do it, but any way send a note to him and bring in the idea of grinding and sign yourself 'Old Grindstone.' That is, if you can, do him a favor but also tell him you are busy with your grinding though you'll do it, and sign yourself, 'Old Grindstone.'"

"Good! I'll do it. That's sensible, not to get mad at everything, but control your temper. You are a jewel, Kitty."

Very soon, Bill said, "Phil, some of us are

going to have a walk into the country and we would like to have you go too."

This invitation was given at the academy-door, in the presence of half a dozen students.

"I'll think it over, thank you."

"Don't grind on it too long, Old Grindstone!"

"Ha—ha—ha!" laughed the group.

Phil's face colored but he said nothing. He passed into the academy, went to his desk, wrote a note, and asked a boy who was going out to hand it to Hawkins, if Hawkins were still at the door. Bill was there noisily talking away with other students and the most of them belonged to the group that had laughed at Phil. Bill opened the note.

"Ah!" he said. "From Grindstone!"

"Read it!" called out one boy.

"Let us know what he has ground out now!" said a second. Bill read:

"Many thanks for your invitation to a walk, but I shall have to decline it. You know I must grind away on my studies, and it is not hard to grind. I like it. Remember, I am always your

"OLD GRINDSTONE."

"Ah, indeed!" cried Bill, gritting his teeth. "He likes to be called 'Old Grindstone.' He thinks it a compliment."

"I thought he looked tickled when you called out to him," said a student.

"Catch me tickling him with that feather again!" declared Bill.

"It seemed to set him right up," remarked a third boy.

"Well, we will set him right down," said Bill. "A swelling round and setting himself up thinking he's a grindstone! He is only a fisherman's son at home! No more 'Grindstone' though! That pleases him too much."

Kitty maintained a very good institution, and one to be commended to everybody, a diary. She wrote this comment on the affair, "Some folks in this world seem just to live to pull other folks down—but Phil and I won't let Bill Hawkins do it."

Bill's next effort was more serious. "Boys," he said, to the usual clique surrounding him, "that Tolman feller sets himself up too high. Now I've thought of something. Let's take a lot of beer to his room and make him drink it if we can, but anyway at seven o'clock get the Old Torpedo or the young one to call round at Phil's room, and he will find that young man surrounded by beer bottles, all alone, looking like a fool and making a fool of himself, maybe."

"But how get Old Torpedo there?" he was asked.

"Oh, I'll fix it."

Old Torpedo was the principal, Dr. Peters. His health had failed him, and it was known that any day his place might be taken, for the rest of the term, by a young man. Bill and his set had determined to call the successor Young Torpedo. As it was not known who might be in the chair that evening, the old or the new principal, a note directed to "The Principal" simply, was sent to the post-office. It read,

"Dear Sir,—Please call at my room at seven to-night.

"Respectfully yours,

"PHILIP TOLMAN."

Bill had forged this, imitating Phil's hand clumsily.

About half after six, while Phil was studying busily in his room, he heard a knock at his door, accompanied by a suspicious sound of whispers.

"Come in!" called out Phil.

In walked Bill and half a dozen other students.

"How are you, Philip?" asked Bill, pompously.

"Oh—oh!" exclaimed the embarrassed Phil,

springing up and flying about. "Take some chairs, gentlemen!"

But where were chairs for six?

"Oh, no matter," said one boy. "Don't get me a chair!"

There were three chairs in the room, just three.

Phil was excitedly trying to work out the problem how three chairs could accommodate seven persons, setting the three chairs in a row, then resetting them as if they would multiply in the process. The boys looked on, enjoying Phil's embarrassment.

"Oh, never mind, Old Grindstone!" said Bill, forgetting that vow of abstinence from all use of the nickname. "The floor will do. Drop, boys, drop!"

Down they "dropped" hilariously.

"Old Grindstone is glad to see you," Phil assured them. "Make yourselves at home."

"Old Grindstone" himself though was not at home, even in his own room. He did not know what was coming, but he suspected an outbreak of mischief any moment. He concealed his fears, joking and laughing.

Suddenly Bill sprang up and cried, "Boys, where is that basket?"

Some one brought in a basket from the en-

try. Bill took from the basket several bottles whose labels advertised about as hard and stiff and pugnacious a beer as ever knocked a man down. Then was heard the clink of glasses.

"Now, gents, help yourselves! Here, Phil!" was Bill's invitation.

"No, I thank you," replied Phil, stiffly, "I never drink."

"What, never drink water?" asked one.

This was thought to be wit, and was received with a boisterous shout of laughter.

Suddenly one of the revellers sprang to his feet, pulled out his watch and cried, "Boys, it's most seven! Put!"

All except Bill accepted the advice in the promptest fashion possible and rushed out of the room. Bill intended to execute as lively a "put" as anybody. He did not carry out his intention for the best of reasons; two stout hands laid on his coat-skirts were vigorously detaining him.

"Here, Bill, take that stuff with you!"

"Oh—oh—no, my son!"

"Yes, my father! You take it!"

"No, it is yours! Take it as a present!"

"Bill Hawkins, you know me. You just put that truck in the basket or I'll pitch it out of the window."

"And then everybody will see it and wonder at the spree in your room—ha—ha!"

"Bill, I am serious"—here Phil took a fresh clutch at those coat-skirts—"you had no business to bring that stuff here. It is only fair you should take it away."

"Who is your servant?" asked Bill, sneeringly.

Here Phil let go the coat-skirts, and making a quick, dexterous jump, put himself between the door and Bill. Another moment, Phil had slammed the door, and his back was against it.

Bill was now mad.

"You mean to say, puppy, you're really going to stop me?"

"Yes, sir."

Bill laid his hands on Phil, and it became a serious grapple at once.

"Pack up those bottles there!" ordered Phil.

"No, sir!"

"You brought them!"

"Don't care! I won't take them away!"

"You shall."

"I won't."

"Yes, sir."

"No, sir."

"I don't believe in the stuff, Bill, and you know it. Take it away, I tell ye!"

In the meantime, somebody who in vain had knocked at the door, proceeded to open it, and when Phil in the midst of a tussle next shouted, "Take away your old beer!" a sonorous voice shouted, "Come, come, young men!"

Another, and a female voice, was nervously exclaiming, "Massy sakes, what's the matter?"

Bill and Phil got up from the floor. Phil had a look of indignant righteousness. Bill's face showed the sheepishness of guilt. They both looked up and there was the "Young Torpedo," the Rev. Ripley Eaton, who had come to take the principal's place awhile. Behind him was Phil's landlady, lifting her hands in horror.

"Phil," Mr. Eaton was saying, "what does this mean? I found your note."

"I didn't send any note, sir. I only know that this feller and others brought beer into my room and I wouldn't touch it and——"

"Yes, yes," said the landlady, nervously putting in her word, "I seed 'em a-comin' and bringin' a basket and this chap was the head one."

She pointed at Bill.

Mr. Eaton knew Bill Hawkins.

"Hawkins, what have you got to say for yourself?" he asked.

"A pack of lies!" asserted Bill, gruffly.

"We will see about that," said Mr. Eaton. "You may go to your room, and I will investigate this matter."

The new principal investigated the matter thoroughly, and Bill Hawkins went home in disgrace. Then he was sent to sea and everybody was willing he should stay there.

"Phil," said the principal one day, "do you know what helped you when things looked against you, some of the boys saying you were a participant in that drinking affair? It was your good reputation—what I had known you to be. Character is a man's strong castle. You may get inside of it and defy the world."

"Thank you!" said Phil.

He and the principal then separated.

There was soon announced a contest for a list of prizes to be given at the close of the term. Phil and Kitty looked at the posted list of studies that included composition, arithmetic, algebra and other branches.

"I'd like to try for the composition," said Kitty.

Phil though shook his head.

"I don't know about that—for me any way, but I am thinking of this. There's arithmetic. Perhaps I am equal to that, but I know you could get it easy as rowing a boat and you're

good at that. Now we are studying arithmetic, in the same class. How would it do for both to try for that? I don't know as I should get it. You would and so it would come to the Tolman family. You see you wouldn't be so sure of the prize for composition, but you can get the arithmetic one."

"I'll think of it," said Kitty, smiling in her good-natured way.

They separated, going to their rooms. Phil at once picked up his arithmetic and bending down toward it, began to calculate his chances for a prize. He shook his head.

"I can't get it, but Kitty will," he muttered. "It will come to the family."

If he could have seen through house-walls, he would have seen Kitty at her table, bending over a book. She too was looking at her arithmetic.

"I think I *can* get a prize," she concluded, "but Phil—shall if I can bring it about."

The close of the term drew near. The contestants for the prizes were set to work one morning, and in the arithmetic section, Phil and Kitty were busy. May Elliott presided over this section and at the hour of eleven all papers, finished or unfinished, were to be handed to her.

It was generally conceded in the arithmetic section that the prize would go to Kitty or Phil.

"Kitty will have it," thought the teacher. "Next to Kitty, Phil stands the best chance. If two should happen to work out the problem, the prize—one of money—will be divided between them. What is Kitty stopping for? She has probably finished."

The teacher was confirmed in this opinion by the recollection that a few minutes ago, she happened to pass Kitty's desk, and saw something of her work. Familiar with all the rounds of progress in the working up of the problem, she knew that Kitty was near the top-round of the ladder.

Kitty had stopped her work, not because she was on that top-round, but, halting just below it, she was querying whether to advance and stand on the ladder's summit. She had her share of pride. She had been envied by some of the girls for her beauty. They did not covet her dresses, which might be grouped under the phrase "old-fashioned." They had shot out criticisms at her mode of dress, and these arrows had reached Kitty and wounded her. "To win a prize would be a nice thing," Kitty was now reflecting. "It would shame

those girls. They don't think even of venturing to try for a prize. Ah, it would shame them if I succeeded."

Then she looked at Phil. He was persistently climbing the ladder, but he was not so near that top-round as Kitty.

"I suppose Phil would like to have it," reasoned Kitty. "Poor fellow! Some of the students think he was somewhat to blame in that beer affair, and I know Phil has felt it. He has told me as much. If he should get the prize, wouldn't his face 'brighten up,' as Uncle Boardman says! I can see him smile now. What had I better do? Take the prize or let Phil carry it off?"

Pride and love, a student's ambition and a sister's affection, were contending.

Kitty looked at the unfinished problem. One more step, and she was on the top-round. She played with her pencil. Then she touched the slate and made with the pencil a solitary figure. She looked at Phil.

He was working intensely, his fingers flying, his face flushed.

Kitty looked at the clock.

Five minutes more!

May Elliott would say at eleven, "Time is up!" That would end the effort.

Many of the scholars had given up the contest. Two besides Phil were at work, fumbling somewhere about the half-way round of the ladder.

"Time is almost up!" said the teacher, looking significantly at Kitty.

"Why doesn't that Kitty work out her problem?" wondered the teacher. "Is she going to let Phil beat?"

"Yes," Kitty had said to herself, "Phil shall get the prize."

Her pencil as little stirred as if it had been held in the hand of a statue.

"One minute more!" called out May Elliott.

Phil sprang from his desk, a triumphant smile irradiating his face, and he carried his completed work to May Elliott. He expected to see Kitty advancing also. He knew she could win the prize, "half of it any way," he told himself. He did not wish to take the whole.

"Time is up!" called out the teacher, and the clock began to strike eleven.

Kitty's hand, Kitty's feet had not stirred. Had every part of her turned into a statue?

"That is queer!" Phil thought. "Why didn't Kitty go up?"

Her teacher asked her afterwards, "Why didn't you hand in your paper, Kitty?"

"It was not finished, Miss Elliott."

"But why didn't you finish it?—excuse me, though, for asking the question. It is your own matter."

Kitty smiled, but did not answer the question.

"You need not tell me," thought the teacher. "You were very generous to your brother."

It was the last day of the term.

Mr. Eaton was still acting as principal, attending to his Sunday duties at the Harbor, and soon expecting to resume his week-day work. He had said this to the school, "The conferring of the prizes will take place the last day. Mr. Gilmore, of the Board of Trustees, will be in town and he will give out the prizes."

"Who is Mr. Gilmore?" the students asked, seeking for light. Light they could not give one another, and none of the teachers enlightened them. "Mr. Gilmore" remained a mystery.

The hall of the academy was thronged that last day to see among other sights the victors receive their prizes. Phil sat in a triumphant row awaiting the moment of its coronation. Kitty's seat was a rear one. She was looking

out upon the bright, animated scene before her, when she started to see—Atwood Gilmore enter the room!

"Then that's *the* Gilmore!" she murmured aloud in her surprise, and more than one looked at her. She did not look at them; she had eyes for the newcomer alone. He had taken a seat with other visitors on the platform and bowed in pleasant recognition to this one and that one among the adults.

Kitty's heart was beating fast. "He won't bow to me," she sighed.

Mr. Eaton said very soon, "After music, the prizes will be distributed. The fortunate students will come forward as their names are called. Music!"

There was a jingle of piano-notes and then a jubilant outburst of fresh, youthful voices, a big flock of bobolinks warbling in the old academy-hall.

When the songsters had ceased their notes, everybody with a smile looked around to the right and to the left, the smile saying, "Very fine."

The prize-winners then came forward in a body, and as a name was called, some victor would step before Atwood Gilmore and nervously wait for the promised crown.

"Philip Tolman!" echoed Mr. Eaton's clear tone.

"There goes Phil!" thought Kitty. "What is that boy doing? Why! he is bowing to—the man!"

Yes, Phil had given the prize-distributor one of his bright, expressive nods that said, "I know you! How-dy-do?"

"And he is bowing back!" thought Kitty.

Yes, Phil's recognition had been returned.

"Oh, dear!" Kitty was saying, inwardly. "If I had only won a prize, he might have bowed to me!"

And there on the back seat, Kitty blushed at the thought of this recognition.

"Oh, dear!" sighed Kitty.

Some one turned round when Kitty sighed.

"Do you want the window open?" said the commiserating neighbor.

"Yes, to put you out of it," was Kitty's impulsive thought.

Then she confusedly shook her head that seemed to be in a furnace and her burning cheeks were its doors.

Hark!

The principal was speaking:

"After more music, Mr. Gilmore will address the school."

That music was to Kitty the longest, most tiresome piece of melody imaginable. She welcomed its last note, and then gave all her attention to the speaker. Though at the other end of the room, she could see his face very distinctly and every note of his voice sank deep into her soul.

"The same face, same eyes, same clear voice —same man, I know, unless that Miss Parmenter has changed him—and now I will listen," thought Kitty.

She sat as if she were a thirsty soul drinking from a precious fountain. The lower part of her face was covered by the hands she leaned upon, but her bright eyes, her well-shaped forehead, and soft brown hair, were all uncovered. Had he noticed her? At first the speaker's eyes seemed to wander about the room as if he were searching for some one. Then they rested upon Kitty's beautiful face and did not apparently look elsewhere.

"He is looking at me," thought Kitty. "He is speaking to me. He is not talking to anybody else—just me—me."

Then to Kitty's mind all the people in the hall so visible and substantial before, like so many pillars having shape and size and weight, now vanished as if pieces of mist, mere wreaths

of fog, and she was in a boat on the sea. He too was in the boat, talking to her as she leaned on her oars and she steadily looked at him as he musically said:

"We must know—every one here—you who have won prizes must know—and I too want to realize—that in the daily life we all the time are trying to touch some goal, reach some achievement, win some prize. We may do it unconsciously, unappreciatively, but the fact remains that there is something we are all the time trying to get. It may be something very unworthy that stings our hands and burns our mouth and scars us all over, the moment we say it is ours. But from that moment of ownership, we would like to get rid of it, yet can not, alas—"

He paused. One moment, he took his eyes off from Kitty as if looking for another.

"I understand him," thought Kitty. "He means that woman. He is making a confession. I wonder if she is here!"

Now Kitty was not out on the sea but in the academy, looking round on bodies of flesh and bone, and wondering whether Miss Parmenter were there. Miss Parmenter was not to be seen.

"Oh, good!" thought Kitty.

He was speaking again, though looking elsewhere now, and the people vanished again, and Kitty was in a boat with her fascinating passenger.

"'What do you mean,' you ask? You go down street and you find a man who has given himself up to the pleasure of getting, of acquiring, or he has surrendered himself to some animal appetite, not thinking very much of what he is doing, perhaps, but alas, he has done it, and can't get away from it. It may be something to-day that is not very serious, and it may be something, too, just for this day. 'I've carried my point,' he says. Ah, it has carried him. You see, then, how serious this makes everything we do, and how careful we ought to be. It may be only the studying of some lesson just for a hasty quarter of an hour, but the lesson will leave its mark upon us. 'I've got the lesson,' we say. The lesson has got us. We ought, then, to be careful and hold the mind to the contemplation of the best ideals, surrounding our soul with the highest influences like a guard of good angels, keeping before us the outlines of One whom God gave us that He might be the world's Saviour and every soul's example."

One moment he stood in silence, looking

at Kitty's entranced face. Then he turned away and sat down. The boat had come in from the sea, and Kitty was in the academy.

"That—that I liked!" Kitty wanted to say aloud. "He can't help preaching, whatever he does. He ought to be a preacher. I expected he would say to me, 'Kitty, Kitty, have you been trying to make the most of yourself?' Oh, dear—I haven't!"

There was more "music," a "valedictory," "music," and the exercises closed. The buzz of parting words made the hall like a big bee-hive.

May Elliott, surrounded by scholars anxious to say good-bye, could not reach Atwood Gilmore at once, but she came to him soon in response to his efforts to reach her.

"Miss Elliott, I am obliged to go, but I wanted to tell you how gratifying is the progress your scholars have made in your department of work."

"Oh, thank you!"

"You will be at the Harbor spending vacation, I suppose?"

"Yes, sir—and, Mr. Gilmore, there are here to-day two of the young people from the Harbor. You gave a prize to one of them in arithmetic, Philip Tolman."

"I remember him among the prize-takers, a manly boy, with that kind of a face that lights up, as we say. It amused me to see him bow to me, and I could not but bow to him."

"He has a sister who, I think, might easily have taken the prize, but she really gave it away to him. That is my opinion."

"That is self-denying. Where did she sit?"

"In the rear row."

"I should like to meet her, and another person there, I wonder who it may be. When I am speaking to a roomful, I sometimes have a way of singling out some particular person and talking long as I dare to that person; then I look away. It is a little sentiment I have that if I meet the needs of a single case, I am likely to meet the wants of others. A particular face—what I could see of it—interested me very much. It made me think of a girl who once rowed me along the coast—a very, very interesting face that you might almost say, haunts me. I seem to see her rowing that boat even now. Of course, it was a different person from this academy student, for my heroine was only a barefoot girl."

"Didn't you mention the case to Mrs. Dr. Plympton?"

"I did."

"She mentioned it to me, and I have neglected to make inquiries."

"I wonder, Miss Elliott, if I could see the young people from the Harbor you spoke of?"

May Elliott looked about the room.

"I am sorry. I—I think they must have left. Yes, they have gone."

Too late, Sir Trustee!

Kitty had arranged for a prompt return home, Tinkham True having agreed to come for Phil and Kitty and the old leather-covered trunk holding their goods.

The very moment May Elliott was saying "They have gone," Tinkham True standing on the sidewalk was saying to Phil and Kitty, "Wall, young folks, as there seems to be nothin' here you are wanted for, we'll start for hum."

They started, but while Kitty's body was on the rear seat of Boardman Blake's covered wagon, in spirit she was still in the academy hall, her eyes fastened on other eyes searching the depths of her soul.

Was she never to meet him?

She had spoken to Mrs. Plympton when she was Kitty's teacher about the ships that meet at sea and then separate, and were she and Atwood Gilmore the two ships fated never to

meet again? She had noticed almost with envy the deepening friendship of Ripley Eaton and May Elliott. They were not two ships meeting and parting, but meeting and staying by one another. It was a stay not simply for a season, but that very day when riding from Drewbury to the Harbor in a vehicle that could carry only two, did they not resolve to make the "staying by one another" a lifelong matter?

CHAPTER XXII.

THE LIFE-SAVING STATION.

MORNING in the life-saving station, a bright morning on the edge of September, but several years away from the date of our last chapter. Two old men approached its rear door, unlocked it and entered.

"Wall, Toby," said Tinkham True, "now I s'pose as the station opens Monday what we've got to do is to air the place, sweep up and set things to rights gin'rally, though they seem sot enough already."

Yes, everything in the living-room was apparently in order, the cook stove in its place, the clock stamped "U. S. L. S. S." ("United States Life Saving Station") and a "U. S. L. S. S. Library, No.—." Two patrol lanterns hung below the library-case, and there were two sockets for Costan signals. The dining table was in its place, and the chairs were set against the wall in very prim fashion.

"Peep in here, Tinkie! Things look all right!"

As he spoke, Tobias Tolman opened the door into the boat-room, and the two old men stood on the threshold, silently looking in. There were the patiently waiting surf-boat and the life-car, the breeches-buoy and other saving apparatus. Everything was in place, and everything had an air of waiting for orders, as if orders might come any moment, and a stentorian voice be heard shouting, "Open boat-room doors! Man the beach-wagon!" Then at once, though touched by no visible hand, the doors would fly open, the wagon begin to roll forward, and a pile of life-saving apparatus move down the beach.

"My!" exclaimed Tinkham. "Things in here look as if they might start off any moment if you jest shout 'wreck,' at 'em, jest awaitin' to fly like the snappin' seed of my wife's balsams. Wall, it seems neat enough, but I s'pose a sweepin' out would be a good thing."

"Yes," said Tobias, proudly, "my Steve likes to have things slicked up 'fore work begins."

"He gone to Drewbury and the Centre to-day?"

"Yes, goin' to be gone till to-morrer, and he says, 'Git Tinkham and make things tidy

down to the station. Goin' to open Monday.'"

"Steve has done well to become keeper of this station."

"Yes, that's so!" declared Tobias, emphatically. "You know when he came here——"

"Lemme see! A year ago——"

"Tinkie! Your mem'ry isn't standin' by ye. 'Twas over three years ago—most four——"

"Wall, wall, what's a year more nor less, Tobias? Guess my mem'ry's good for suthin'!"

"Oh, yes—that's all right," said Tobias, sorry now because he had suggested that in the direction of memory, Tinkham True was an inferior being. "Oh, yes! I think Steve has done well to work his way up."

"You're right thar, neighbor."

They came back into the living-room, opened its windows, seized two brooms and began to sweep in leisurely fashion.

"I'll jes' clear out that ere corner up thar!" said Tobias, mounting a chair and trying with his broom to sweep a cobweb out of a corner.

"Look out, Toby! 'Cos your rheumatiz don't trouble you so much now-a-days, you needn't think you can do everything. Thar, thar! No use, boy, no use! Lemme reach it."

Here the puffing, heated Tobias got down from his chair, and the tall Tinkham proceeded to mount it, and he then complacently removed the offense in the corner. Tobias might have the best memory, but Tinkham would not "swap his long legs for Tobias' rememberin'" he often assured himself.

"I feel frisky as a kitten, Tinkie," declared Tobias, launching his broom across the floor, and determined to show what he could accomplish below though he had signally failed above.

"Frisky, Toby?"

"Yes, I feel as if I could jump over this buildin'."

"But you can't, Toby. 'Tain't your feelin's but your doin's in this world that count."

"That's so, Tinkie," said Tobias rather mournfully, conscious of the infirmities of old age.

"Oh, well, brace up, boy, brace up! You're good for suthin' yet. You worked amazin' spry on Steve's new house."

"Didn't I?" replied the emotional Tobias, raising his drooping head. "I did help some on that."

"Some? That don't begin to tell it. You were scratchin' on it early and late. When is

Steve goin' to move in? You told me you meant to sell yourn and go with him."

"Oh, most any time he says, we go. Got his fore-room fixed up for cumpny, though he don't know who's a-comin'! Lyddy Blake says he ought to have a house-warmin'."

"Wall, Steve has done well. He's got to be keeper here, and got a new house—I spect Kitty helped him on that——"

"Yes, she put in and helped. You see she took a year and a-half at the 'cademy, and she's been a-teachin' ever since. Kitty says she's a-goin' to collige next."

"Wall, she'll git thar ef she starts out. That's whar I think evry woman ought to go if they have a hanker that way, and do evry thing they want to, from a-votin' to anything else they want to do, and we men ought to help 'em," said Tinkham, gallantly.

"The good of it will git round to us, Tinkie."

"You said that like a phlospher. I allers thought you had a tech of that to ye."

After this compliment, how proudly Tobias did sway his broom!

"Kitty ain't goin' to git married, Toby?"

"Don't see no sign of it."

"A dredful interestin' gal, I think. And Phil, he's a-puttin' ahead."

"Yes, he has jest got through his fust year at collige and he'll be to home any day."

"Boardman Blake did a good thing for Phil when he sot him to runnin' the mill. Collige? Sort of an engineerin' school, ain't it?"

"Yes, that's it. Phil found out at the mill he had a fancy for machinery, and it's a merchanical engineer he'll make."

"A good, lively, stiddy boy as you'd often see. And he's payin' his way?"

"Yes, most of it, though Farmer Hawkins lends him suthin'."

"That's good! How Hawkins did seem to think Phil did him an everlastin' favor when he rescued his Bill from the mill! Most of us think it was a bad egg picked out of that ere baskit."

"Wall, they say Bill's improvin' since goin' to sea. He's sort of workin' off his—his—narvousness."

"Ho-he, Toby! That's a good name for it. He has got some left, now I tell ye. Wall, the sea is a good place for a lot of people. Straightens you out! Hy-hy, Toby! Look out thar! Goin' for another corner?"

"Gin it up," said Tobias, sorrowfully, trying in vain to clear out another corner where drooped a black, baggy web.

"Thar fur ye!" said Tinkham, giving a triumphant broom-sweep, then looking about complacently.

"You must look out or you'll have the appleplexy. Wall, tell us 'bout some more folks. Have you seen that min'ster, Eaton, lately? You're good as a newspaper, Toby."

The doleful face of Tobias brightened. To think he, humble Tobias Tolman, should be equal, in the opinion of this man of good judgment, to the *Drewbury Daily Times.*

"Wall, I do know suthin'. He's jest settled over the big parish in Drewb'ry, and they say May Elliott makes him a fus'-class wife."

"Couldn't help it if she tried! Your Harbor gals are the ones to marry! I'd pick 'em out 'fore any gal from Dan to Beersheeby."

"Guess ye forgit," said Tobias, slyly, "you married a gal what was an outsider yourself."

"Oh, so I did. Wall! You got me thar! How's Plympton a-gittin' along?"

"The doctor?"

"He's the one."

"It's apple-pie with him all day now. You know he commenced in a poor quarter, and now he's worked up into a fus'-class practice, and he don't forgit poor folks now, neither."

"I spec so, and his wife—warn't she raised here?"

"Say, Tink, have you forgotten that she kept our school and you wanted to go to her and you was dredful taken with her and——"

The forgetful Tinkham was slowly shaking his head in a bewildered way.

"Why, she is Minister Eaton's sister, and——"

Here, the elated Tobias gave a careless lunge at another lofty web.

"Look out *thar!*" roared Tinkham. "You'll upset yourself."

Things now came into balance again, and the two old men worked side by side, until the lower floor had been swept. Then they went up-stairs and operated in the keeper's little retreat, and finally in the "men's room," with its six cot-beds ranged along the walls, empty now, but soon to be occupied, as another season opened. When this room had been swept and aired, the two cronies were disposed to enjoy a little fun. Tinkham ran down-stairs and cried out from some hiding-place, "Can't find me!"

"Can't I, Tinkie? You needn't think this ere place is a haymow, and that it's like a-huntin' for hen's nests. I'll git ye, in one minute."

But Tobias did not discover the secretive

Tinkie in one minute, nor in two, nor in three.

"Whar's that crittur gone?" muttered Tobias. "Huntin' for hen's nests in a haymow is nothin' to this!"

Finally, he chanced to pull forward a door that had been swung back, and there he saw ——what? Had he found a hen's nest? What did he see? A big hen's egg, ostrich egg, egg of a roc? It was Tinkham's bald head. But it did not stir. That motionless object excited Tobias, but not in the way the sight of any egg-trophy in the corner of a haymow would be likely to affect any finder. Tobias stepped to an outside door and began to weep profusely. He had made a good deal of noise on his journey to the outside air, for he ran against a chair, then he stumbled over the two brooms left on the floor, and finally he hit the open oven-door of the stove, which closed with a bang. All this disturbance could but be audible behind Tinkham's door, and soon a soft, solicitous voice was heard by Tobias:

"Toby, boy, what ye cryin' for? Brace up, boy, brace up!"

"Can't!" blubbered Tobias. "Your head —der— looked — as if — fer—'twas — dead— der!"

"My head dead, Toby?" said Tinkham, feeling that bare, shining member. "Why, no—it—it's alive—and—fact is"—he whispered—"I got—asleep."

"Got—ter sleep?"

"Why yes, boy! You didn't come, and I was sort of tired—anda—nd——"

Tobias was wiping out his eyes, while Tinkham, deeply moved by this display of his friend's affection, was wondering what he should say next. How relieved he was when he saw Kitty Tolman coming, and he heard her calling, "Chowder—here's—chow—der!"

She was carrying a pail of steaming chowder.

"Brace up, Toby! I ain't agoin' to die and leave ye. I had no idee I'd scar ye—you know I can't keep still more'n a minute but I git asleep. Brace up! Steve said we might have lunch here you know, and Kitty said she'd bring it. Brace up! Git out a couple bowls from that cubburd!"

Kitty came up to the door and looked in. No wonder that Tinkham True, the chivalrous knight, made an immense bow, that brought to the surface all the smiles and dimples of her sweet, noble face. She was a woman now, her added years only bringing out into fulfilment

the rich promises that youth had made. There was the old impulsiveness—better regulated, and yet there still, giving her moods the charm of enthusiasm.

"Gran'sir, here is your chowder, and if you'll leave the dish and your bowls, I'll come down again and look after them."

"Miss Tolman," said Tinkham, bowing admiringly, "we'll wash 'em."

"Oh, but you haven't the water."

"We'll wash 'em in the sea," said Tinkham, solemnly, bowing again.

"You'd better have some hot water. I'll take care of them. I am coming down, you know."

"Madame, we'll scour 'em in the sand and then wash 'em in the sea."

Kitty turned away, laughing, and told the dish-washers that hot water and a cloth were better than sand and icy water.

She was hindered from coming to the station that day, but purposed to call in the morning early.

"Father said," was her thought, "he would come from Drewbury and stopping at the Centre to-night, would meet Phil at the Centre Station—for the cars come to the Centre now—and an early morning train—at sunrise—

brings Phil. Then on his way to the Harbor, father also said, he would call at Tinkham True's, for gran'sir has gone there to spend the night, and he will bring gran'sir back with Tinkham, who will spend the day with gran'sir. So we shall be together, breakfast-time. That Phil! He is a tall, manly fellow, and going ahead in his studies and they all say he will succeed in his profession of mechanical engineering. Phil too is a Christian. He has made up his mind thoroughly, he writes me, and I know he will be true. How much I have to be grateful for! I feel like singing all the time."

The first of the sun's rays were falling on the station door, when a voice was heard approaching it, a rich voice singing,

"The King of love my Shepherd is,
Whose goodness faileth never;
I nothing lack if I am his,
And he is mine for ever."

Kitty ceased her matin-carol, unlocked the door, and entered the kitchen.

"There are the dishes. Everything else is all right. Now I will see how it is in the boat-room."

There amid such very suggestive pieces of

rescue apparatus as the surf-boat, life-car and life-line, she caroled another verse:

"Perverse and foolish oft I strayed,
But yet in love he sought me,
And on his shoulder gently laid,
And home, rejoicing, brought me."

Then she went up-stairs and looked into the men's room. "All right!" she exclaimed.

She turned away to her father's room. She saw on a table his worn Bible.

"Father reads that every day. How much it has helped him! People say because he stopped drinking, that is the secret of his prosperity, but his Bible has kept him from straying again," reflected Kitty. She went to a window that looked landward. She could see a meadow brook. Her voice warbled,

"Where streams of living waters flow,
My ransomed soul he leadeth,
And where the verdant pastures grow,
With food celestial feedeth."

Then she looked around on the simply furnished room. In a chair, she saw a newspaper. It was a copy of the *Drewbury Daily Times*. At the head of a column, she saw in large conspicuous type the words, "Shipping News." She looked at the paper. "No shipping news

for me!" she murmured, and then sighed. She was thinking of Atwood Gilmore. He was almost constantly in the world of Kitty's thoughts. She knew that Miss Parmenter and he had finally separated. He had resolved to study for the ministry and Miss Parmenter would not encourage him in the purpose.

"If you persist, Atwood," she told him, "I shall break the engagement."

"May he persist!" thought Mrs. Dr. Plympton, and all of Atwood's friends thought the same way.

"The engagement is at an end, Miss Parmenter wrote him, "for you say you have irrevocably made up your mind. I anticipate only disaster for you."

It seemed as if she were a prophet, for, soon after that decision had been reached, a financial tornado struck the estate bequeathed him, made up of various kinds of stocks, and left only a ruin behind.

"Poor as his Master!" said Mrs. Dr. Plympton.

"Owns nothin' but his cross," said Aunt Lyddy.

"Wall," said Tinkham True, "I hearn him speak at the school-house and he is rich in himself."

Atwood's own special thought was, "Now

my money has gone, perhaps I can get all the closer to poor people and folks in trouble. I don't care. Let the money go! I'll give myself all the more freely since I have nothing else to give."

There was a young woman at the Harbor who once had sat in a boat with him and yet felt that a mountain rose between them. The mountain had continued to tower. At the Drewbury Academy, it rose between them, though the eye saw only a level floor stretching back from the platform where the speaker stood, to the rear seat that Kitty occupied. The separating mountain was now levelled, and her heart beat excitedly and sympathetically she saw in thought a poor pilgrim starting out, as a cross on his back.

Once after beginning his theological studies, the pilgrim came to the Harbor and spoke for his Master at the Hall, where services were continued by Ripley Eaton's successor. Atwood then sought out Kitty. "I shall never forget the girl that I once saw in a boat here," he said, his dark eyes thrilling her soul through and through.

Now and then, he might send her a paper containing some reference to church-work or educational movements of interest. That was

all, but Kitty felt that these messengers were like ropes holding together the two ships that had met on the wide sea. She lately had seen in the *Drewbury Times* an item that "Mr. Atwood Gilmore's studies for the ministry were almost completed, but as he was in need of a rest, he was taking a short fishing-trip along our shore."

How that short statement reached out, lengthening, widening, till it seemed to comprehend "every soul that had gone down to the sea in ships!" Kitty always felt for sailors, but somehow her sympathy was now going down to new and deep places. "Afraid there's going to be a wreck," she said, every day even in the sunniest weather, and would sigh as if she felt a blow from a rough wrecking wind.

When this morning, she saw that heading "Shipping News" and in the column below nothing of personal interest to her, it yet looked like a kind of death-warrant.

She had begun to sing another verse,

> "In death's dark vale I fear no ill,
> With Thee, dear Lord, beside me;
> Thy rod and staff my comfort still,
> Thy cross before to guide me."

She began, but could not complete the verse.

She thought of souls out upon the water, to whom the valleys of the sea where billow towers over against billow, might each be only a Valley of Death, and she could not sing any more.

She turned away from the keeper's-room. She went to the foot of the short flight of steps leading up to the lookout on the roof, where she often had seen her father standing, looking off upon the sea, spyglass in hand.

She knew where the glass was kept. She would now climb to the lookout and sweep the sea with that glass.

She mounted the little stairway, forced back the scuttle in the lookout, and then stood upon the platform that, rimmed with a stout railing, was called the lookout.

She turned and with the glass searched the beach and then the southern water.

"Nothing!" she murmured. "Good!" With her glass she was sweeping the water extending toward the west, when suddenly she called out, "Oh—oh—what is that?"

Could it be a rock?

"No rock there!"

Was it a boat?

"Too small for a boat!"

What was it?

"Man in the water! Oh—oh!"

She stepped down from the lookout, closed the scuttle behind her, laid the glass on its shelf, and then hurried down through the building, her heart seeming to make more noise than her feet.

CHAPTER XXIII.

THE FIGHT WITH DEATH.

"FATHER—everybody—come off in your boat and help me!"

She left this appeal pencilled on a slip of paper, and attached it to the door of the little home.

"They may get here in time!" she murmured.

She ran to the beach.

Ah, there was her trusty old boat! The rollers were there, and on these she slid the boat easily to the water's edge—and halted.

One thought of interrogation now flashed across her mind, and she gave heed to the question because it was not an unusual thing to hear people say of her, "impulsive," "impulsive."

"I'll put that word out of the dictionary when I make one," she said in one breath, but in the next, she added, "No, I won't, I'll keep it in, for I dare say I need it there."

The one thought of interrogation was this; as she had heard some of the young men say they would like to try a long swim ashore from their fishing-boats, before fall fairly set in, might not this be "Tom Eaton," or "Jerry Spinney," or "Sylvester Dixon," making the trial?"

"And," replied Kitty, "it may *not* be. The men are away and it is the business of this woman to see what the trouble is and what fisherman is out there. If it were a swimmer, where are the boats watching him, which they would do in that case? No, sir! Launch the boat!" It was good to see Kitty's energy when her mind was made up and she was executing a purpose. She pushed her boat steadily into the sea.

Splashing into the water as if she were once more a barefooted girl of the olden days, she shoved her boat out still farther, and then sprang into it. She knew how to take the surf, and was quickly beyond it, pulling as no woman along the shore could pull. She rowed as few of the men could. She might have less strength, but more skill. The sea was not rough, and her boat made quick headway.

Occasionally, she turned about, and looking seaward, cried, "He is there! I can see him

still! Yes, yes, it's some poor fellow in trouble. God help him!"

It went across her mind like a flash of light, how many souls needing aid there are in this world, and how unconscious we may be of it. Singing away, she had gone into the station that morning, little thinking that at the very moment of her exultation, somebody on the great sea was needing her help. Had she been thinking about others as she ought, all these years she had been thinking about herself, trying to make the most of her brains, trying to make the most of her time, trying to make the most of her physical strength that she might develop the strength intellectual, trying to learn at the academy and teach at the Harbor, and somehow get into college? Others would have testified to a ready generosity and a large self-denial, but she was saying, "All this time so many have been in trouble, so many needing me!"

She turned her head round to the sea.

"Yes," she murmured, "there he is! I'm gaining."

She pulled with new energy, and searched her soul also—

"Now have I been thinking of others enough? There is that poor fellow off in the

water. Why, it may be a fisherman from the houses behind the hummocks, Jimmy Briggs, Billy Parsons, or Joel Morgan; perhaps the youngest along-shore going off in a fishing-boat, Tony Marsden! How I pity the mothers at home if the boys don't get back! Is he there yet?"

She turned her head.

"Yes, he is there!"

She pulled harder than ever. All the shore stretched before her, and she could see nobody running down the sand to launch a boat. Oh, would not some one come to her help? But the man in the water, how did he get there? It was before dawn that morning his boat had been run down by a steamer, a dragon with fiery eyes and hot breath and huge fins that paddled savagely. When he came up from the depths of the sea, he struck a loose plank washed out of his craft and he instinctively gripped it.

"We will keep together," he said.

He needed to keep near something, for though he knew how to swim, he could not swim long without aid.

He gripped the plank hard, thankful that he could grip. He never before made it a special occasion for gratitude.

Morning was not far away, but could he grip and hold on so long? He would try.

At last it was the gray dawn. The light at Seal's Head changed to a silver taper. Gray soon became gold. The east was like a furnace door that might any moment open and a fiery red coal roll out that would grow and change, as by the shaping of Vulcan's hands, and mount and become the day's chariot of fire to sweep through the sky. But not yet. Earth, in shadow, was waiting for this change. The man in the water could see the outlines of the shore hardening into distinctness. He muttered, "It is good to see it! I wanted to see it once before I died."

Die? He was weak, chilled, faint. How easy death would be! Just to let the sea in its soft arms sway him and carry him down to some bed of ease. That was all. No, not all—the bed was cold. Just then he saw a point on the shore, that grew into a form moving. Some one—doing what?

No, he would not die. Life was better. He would get to that shore if the tide, swinging like a pendulum, backward, forward, but now swinging landward, would only bear him on.

"A boat!" he said. "Some one coming in a boat!"

Life was very sweet still. He would hold on a while longer. Yes, the boat was coming nearer. The sun, too, was up. Light was shooting across the great, gray sea. A new day, hope, life!

Yes, he would hold on.

And the rowing of the person in the boat as it came nearer yet? His eye suddenly kindled.

He knew it, this woman's rowing—was there a boy along the shore that did not know it?

He, though, peculiarly knew it. He could tell it from the rowing of all women, all men, in this world and every other, as he put it in his thoughts. Only one person could row that way!

Oh, joy!

His heart, cold, almost dead, was warming into life, as this boat approached him.

Yes, life was worth living for. The sea was a cold, ugly grave.

He could see her form, her shoulders, her hair, everything—so near—so near—yes, the boat was close at his side!

And then the sweetest face in the world was looking into his, so full of pity. The tenderest arms were reaching down to him

and touching him, while a voice, marvellous in its tones of compassion and cheer, was saying,

"Oh, you poor, poor fellow—why, who is it? Cling to me, dear! Oh, may God help me!"

And up from that boat, from the great sea, from the side of that exhausted drift-way in the water, Kitty's face, full of entreaty, was turned to the sky, entreating strength.

"Oh — I am — so glad!" he murmured, feebly. "God sent you! You are my angel, darling!"

"Come now!" she whispered, putting her arms beneath his. "Now help what you can, dear! Now—now!"

He put his hands on the boat rail,—he smiled—"I will, dear," but the body had not the power of the spirit, and Kitty could not raise him! He was heavier than she thought. She tried again. She prayed. She agonized in her soul and raised again, but she was not strong enough. Her boat had shipped several ugly reminders of the need of caution.

His hands were still on the gunwale, but they got no farther. She reached round to the boat's rope, wound its loose end about his body and made it fast to a seat of the boat.

"I wish I could do more," he murmured. "I shall upset you!

"Then we will die together."

"That would be sweet."

He closed his eyes.

"Hold on, dear!" she urged. "Hold on! I have hold of you too. Some one will come."

Some one? Oh, would not some one come? They waited facing death.

She whispered words of encouragement, told him not to fear, and stroked his forehead with her hand. But how long! How long, could he hold on, and how long could she keep her hold upon him?

He thought he would rather let go his hold, and die with her, than be rescued and separated. Might not death be sweeter than life?

But what a cry of hope she suddenly raised!

"They're coming! Yes, they're launching another boat! Thank God! Thank God!" she said.

"Yes," and he echoed in the water her grateful prayer, "thank God!"

Kitty's appeal for help, tacked to the door, had been seen, and Keeper Tolman, Phil, gran'sir and Tinkham True hurried to the beach at once.

"All here?" asked Keeper Tolman as he and his volunteer-crew of life-savers ranged

themselves alongside a waiting boat on the edge of the water.

Tinkham True and Tobias Tolman nodded their old heads in pride, for they were imagining that they belonged to a life-saving crew and were now responding to the keeper's orders.

The boat was rushed into the water at a rapid rate, and Tinkham and Tobias, following Phil and his father, stumbled over the gunwale as nimbly as their rheumatism would permit.

"Two sets of oars, Toby!" cried Tinkham, his eyes glistening as he promptly manned his own oar.

"Pull, now, pull!" the keeper was saying, and away they went.

Faster! faster!

Phil said but little.

He knew that Kitty must be off in the boat he had seen on the water. She was needing help. That was enough. He pulled, Keeper Tolman pulled, Tinkham True and gran'sir pulled. How the oars thumped in the row-locks, how the spray was flung from the oar-blades, and how that boat rushed on, the foam flying around the bow!

And Kitty and the driftaway were reached? Yes, reached and rescued.

When an easterly rain was dripping, there was nothing better that Tinkham True enjoyed than to get a flock of boys and girls into his cosy shop, and starting a fire in the wide fire-place, then tell to the circle of big eyes and open mouths, the story of that marvellous adventure, in which he went to Kitty's help.

"We rowed jest like a life-savin' crew, I tell ye, children! They said that Tobias and me jest saved the day. I says to Toby, 'Brace up, old boy, brace up!' and he braced, I tell ye! We made that boat spin through the waters like a gig at a race. And when we reached Kitty, she was holdin' on to that man —oh, she did look hansom—and he was a holdin' on, his eyes shet, but he was fine-lookin', I tell ye! Kitty she jest cried when we came, and we histed that man out of the water in a jiffy. A life-savin' crew with a whole life-car and a breeches-buoy and a life-line and a wreck-gun thrown in, couldn't have done better. We put Kitty and him into our boat, it bein' nice and dry, and she sat a-steadyin' him and a-holdin' him up, and I could hear her sayin', 'There, there! Poor feller!' Tobias and me got into Kitty's boat and we rowed it ashore and we got in fust, yes, we did, and we beat 'em in tother boat, yes we did,

jest as good as them life-savin' fellers! Then we took him and Kitty out."

"Who's him?" some one would say, Tinkham forgetting that important item in the story.

"Oh, him? That's Gilmore, a fine and likely young man as you will often see, and goin' into the min'stry."

"Where did he go then?"

"Oh, they took him hum to Kitty's.

Yes, to the new house, to the fore-room which was waiting for a guest, and what a house-warming the new home did have! People came flocking from all quarters when they heard the news of the rescue, and at the door made anxious inquiries. Boardman and Lyddy Blake were on hand promptly, and Lyddy helped Kitty make the unexpected guest comfortable in the fore-room.

Aunt Lyddy came out to an interested group in the kitchen and gave them the latest bulletin:

"I left him a-settin' up in the rockin' cheer, that Kitty finished kiverin' only yesterday, and he seemed real happy, jest a-dorin' her with his eyes. She had made him real comfortable, and he did look thankful. Them two souls were jest made for one another."

"I don't doubt it," declared Tinkham. "I sed that to myself soon as I saw 'em out thar in that fix, she in the boat a-holdin' on to him in the water. Oh, I seen that 'mazin' quick."

"Hark!" said Lyddy. "I hear singin'. Lemme sot the door wide open."

Kitty had told Atwood about the Good Shepherd hymn she could only sing in part that morning.

"Won't you sing, darling, the last two stanzas—no, sing all you did not sing."

Out in the kitchen, as the people at this unconventional house-warming heard that rich voice warbling, they listened eagerly. It was a picture, Lyddy, Boardman, Tobias, Tinkham, Keeper Tolman, Phil, all turning toward the fore-room, and their eyes glistened as they heard that joyous outburst of melody.

"In death's dark vale, I fear no ill,
With Thee, dear Lord, beside me;
Thy rod and staff my comfort still,
Thy cross before to guide me.

"Thou spread'st a table in my sight,
Thy unction grace bestoweth,
And oh, the transport of delight,
With which my cup o'erfloweth!

"And so, through all the length of days,
Thy goodness faileth never;
Good Shepherd, may I sing Thy praise
Within Thy house for ever!"

END.

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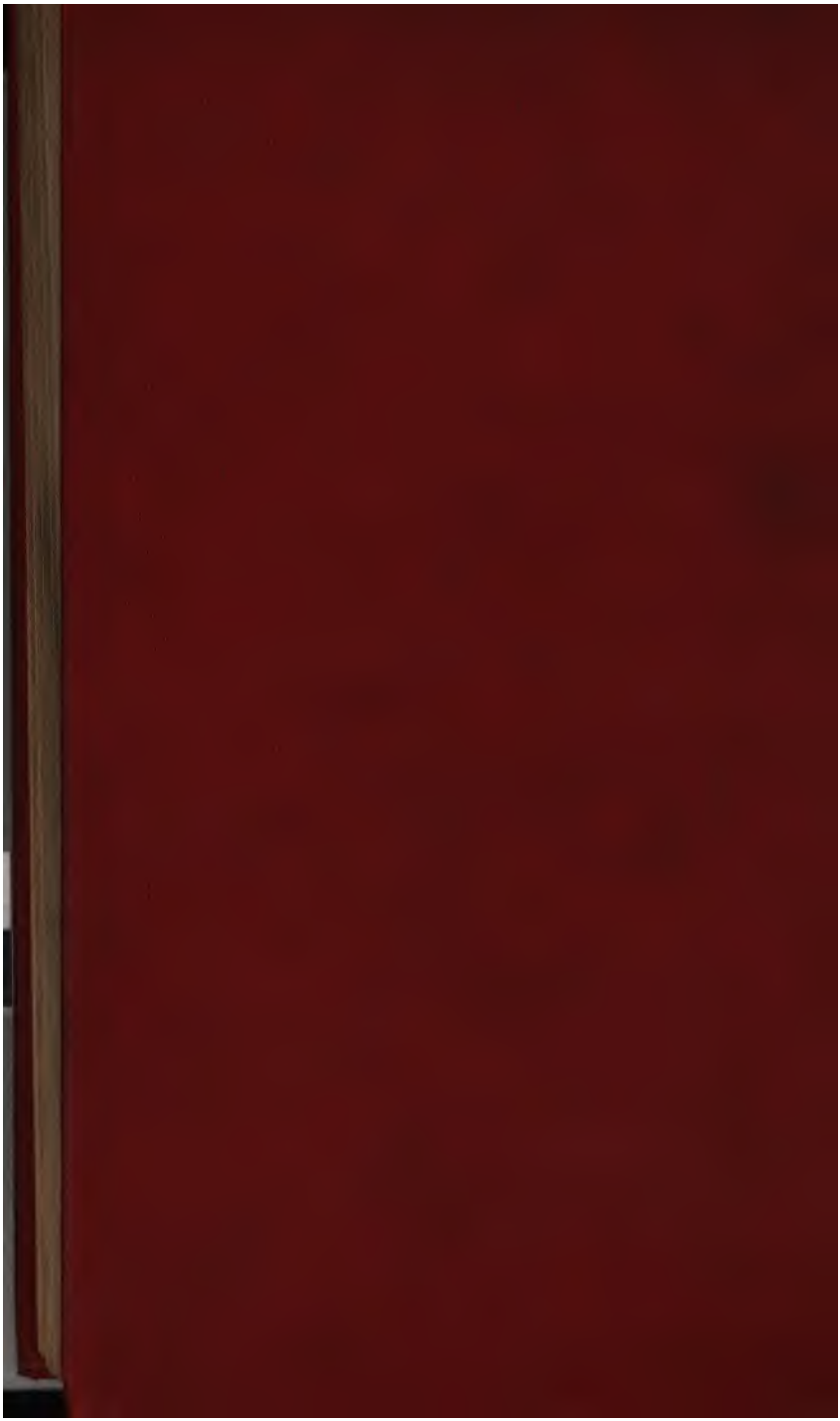
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